Encyclopaedia of Indian War of Independence

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M. N. Roy

Manabendra Nath Roy, 1887 - January 25, 1954), born Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, popularly known as M. N. Roy, was a Bengali Indian revolutionary, internationally known political theorist and activist, founder of the Communist parties in Mexico and India. He later denounced communism, as exponent of the philosophy of radical humanism.

EARLY DAYS

Narendra was born on 21 March, 1887, at Changripota, in the 24 Parganas near Kolkata. This village, along with Arbelia, Harinabhi and Kodalia, was known for its revolutionary ideas, thanks to the presence of a number of social and religious reformers. His father Dinabandhu Bhattacharya, a temple priest at Kheput, in Midnapur district, settled there after the death of his first wife, married Basantakumari Devi, the niece of Dvarkanath Vidyabhushan and was appointed teacher of Sanskrit in nearby Arbelia school. Essentially an auto-didact, beyond elementary schooling, Narendra had almost no formal education though, later, when he joined the National College under Sri Aurobindo and attended some courses at the Bengal Technical Institute, he obtained brilliant results.

Since his boyhood, Naren believed that knowledge is freedom, and "the urge for freedom is inherent in every man." With his cousin and childhood friend Hari Kumar Chakravarti, he formed a band of free-thinkers including Satcowri Banerjee

and the brothers, Saileshvar and Shyamsundar Bose. Two other cousins of Naren and Hari - Phani and Narendra Chakravarti - often came from Deoghar, where they went to school with Barin Ghose. A mysterious Vedic scholar, Mokshada Charan Samadhyayi, active organiser of secret branches of the Anushilan in Chinsura, Serampore, Chandernagore, started frequenting Naren's group. By the end of 1904, Naren and Hari rented a room in the Anushilan building, 49 Cornwallis Street, Kolkata, where Naren's senior cousin Abinash Bhattacharya had joined Barin's faction, eager to initiate violent actions.

Mokshada was a resident of the neighbouring Field and Academy Society. They seized the opportunity of anti-Partition agitations. Naren was a theist and earnestly studied, with Hari, the Bhagavad Gita, the Ananda Math and the Bhavani Mandir, along with writings of Vivekananda. During the tragic flood of 1908 in Orissa, Madhusudan Das published an article in The Statesman of Kolkata and received an immediate response from everywhere.

Requested by Shashibhushan Raychaudhuri, Barrister P. Mitter of the Anushilan delegated volunteers led by Hari Kumar and Naren; on their way back, they brought to Kolkata a good provision of seasoned bamboo sticks to be distributed in the regional units. Under Mokshada's leadership, on 6 December 1907 Naren successfully committed the first political dacoity, to raise money for the secret society. When arrested, he was carrying two seditious books by Barin Ghose. Defended by the Barrister J.N. Roy (close friend of Jatindranath Mukherjee or Bagha Jatin) and the pleader Promothonath Mukherjee, he got released on bail, thanks to his reputation as a student and social worker.

Unhappy with Barin's highly centralised and authoritative way of leadership, Naren and his group had been looking for something more constructive than making bombs at the Maniktola garden. Two incidents sharpened their interest in an alternative leadership. Barin had sent Prafulla Chaki with Charuchandra Datta to see Bagha Jatin at Darjeeling who was

posted there on official duty, and do away with the Lt-Governor; on explaining to Prafulla that the time was not yet ripe, Jatin promised to contact him later.

Though Prafulla was much impressed by this hero, Barin cynically commented that it would be too much of an effort for a Government officer to serve a patriotic cause. Shortly after, Phani returned from Darjeeling, after a short holiday: fascinated by Jatin's charisma, he informed his friends about the unusual man. On hearing Barin censuring Phani for disloyalty, Naren decided to see that exceptional Dada and got caught for good.

The Howrah-Shibpur Trial (1910-11) brought Naren closer to Jatindra Mukherjee. Naren was present when, at Kolkata, the German Crown Prince promised Jatindra arms and ammunition if there was a war between Germany and Great Britain. Indian revolutionaries in Europe led by Virendranath Chattopadhyay signed a bond of collaboration with the Kaiser's government. In 1915, Naren and Phani Chakravarti went to Batavia twice, in this connection. The project failed. After pursuing his search of arms through Asia, Naren reached Palo Alto, and changed his name to Manabendra Nath Roy to evade British intelligence.

INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY

In New York, Roy met his future wife Evelyn Trent through Lala Lajpat Rai, who "had genuine respect" for the youngman. His socialist transition under Lala owed much to Bankimchandra Chatterjee's essays on communism and Vivekananda's msessage of serving the proletariat. Bothered by British spies, Roy fled to Mexico in July 1917 with Evelyn. German military authorities, on the spot, gave him large amounts of money. The Mexican president Venustiano Carranza - and other liberal thinkers - appreciated Roy's writings for El Pueblo. The Socialist Party he founded (December 1917), was converted into the first Communist Party outside Russia. The Roys lodged a penniless Michael Borodin, the Bolshevic leader, under special circumstances.

On the basis of a grateful Borodin's reports on Roy's activities, Moscow was to invite Roy to the 2nd Comintern Congress in July 1920. A few weeks before the Congress, Lenin received Roy with great warmth. Generously desired by Lenin, Roy formulated his own ideas, as a supplement to Lenin's Preliminary Draft These o the National and the Colonial Questions. By adopting Roy's Thesis, alternative to Lenin's, the Party consolidated Roy's position among the orthodox communists. He started publishing in the Inprecor, the official journal. In May 1927, on two occasions, Stalin was to value Roy's thesis to be "more relevent to the situation" than Lenin's.

Commissioned by Lenin to prepare the East - especially India - for revolution, Roy founded military and political schools in Tashkent. In October 1920, as he formed the Communist Party of India, he contacted his erstwhile revolutionary colleagues who, at this juncture, were hesitating between Radicalism (Jugantar) and Gandhi's novel programme. Close to the Jugantar in spirit and action, C.R. Das inspired Roy's confidence. From Moscow, Roy published his major reflections, India in Transition, almost simultaneously translated into other languages. In 1922 appeared Roy's own journal, the Vanguard, organ of the emigre Communist Party of India. These were followed by The Future of Indian Politics (1926) and Revolution and Counter-revolution in China (1930), while he had been tossing between Germany and France.

Leading a Comintern delegation appointed by Stalin to develop agrarian revolution in China, Roy reached Canton in February 1927. Despite fulfilling his mission with skill, a disagreement with the CCP leaders and Borodin led him to a fiasco. Roy returned to Moscow where factions supporting Trotsky and Zinoviev were busy fighting with Stalin's.

Stalin refused to meet Roy and give him a hearing at the plenum in February 1928. Denied a decent treatment for an infected ear, Roy escaped with Bukharin's help, sparing himself Stalin's anger. Shortly after Trotsky's escape, on 22 May 1928,

Roy received the permission to go abroad for medical treatment on board a Berlin-bound plane of the Russo-German Airline Deruluft. In December 1929, the Imprecor announced Roy's expulsion from the Comintern, almost simultaneously with Bukharin's falling in disgrace.

DENOUNCING COMMUNISM

On reaching Mumbai in December 1930, Roy met leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose. Nehru was to write on Roy, "There was a great deal of difference between us, and yet I felt attracted towards him.(…) I was attracted to him by his remarkable intellectual capacity." Arrested in July 1931, Roy was tried for several conspiracy cases, and he served six years' imprisonment. Smuggled out of jail, piles of his letters, manifestos, articles and a couple of books appeared, encouraging his group within the AITUC. He also wrote a 3000-page draft manuscript provisionally titled The Philosophical Consequence of Modern Science. Released (November 1936) with a broken health, he went to Allahabad for recovery, invited by Nehru. Defying the Comintern order to boycott the Indian Congress, Roy urged Indian communists to join this Party to radicalise it.

Nehru, in his presidential address at Faizpur session (December 1936), greeted the presence of Roy, the veteran freedom fighter: "one who, though young, is an old and well-tried soldier in India's fight for freedom. Comrade M.N. Roy has just come to us after a long and most distressing period in prison, but though shaken up in body, he comes with a fresh mind and heart, eager to take part in that old struggle that knows no end till it ends in success."

From the podium Roy in his speech recommended the capture of power by Constituent Assembly. Unable to collaborate with Gandhi, however, Roy was to stick to his own conviction. In April 1937, his weekly Independent India appeared and rejoiced progressive leaders like Bose and Nehru, unlike Gandhi, and the staunch communists who accused Roy of deviation.

RADICAL HUMANISM

In marrying Ellen Gottschalk, "Roy found not only a loving wife but also an intelligent helper and close collaborator." They settled in Dehra Dun. Roy proposed an alternative leadership, seized the crisis following Bose's re-election as the Congress President, in 1938: in Pune, in June, he formed his League of Radical Congressmen. Disillusioned with both bourgeois democracy and communism, he devoted the last years of his life to the formulation of an alternative philosophy which he called Radical Humanism and of which he wrote a detailed exposition in Reason, Romanticism and Revolution.

In his monumental biography, In Freedom's Quest, Sibnarayan Ray writes: "If Nehru had his problems, so had Roy. From early life his sharp intellect was matched by a strong will and extra-ordinary self-confidence. It would seem that in his long political career there were only two persons and a half who, in his estimate, qualified to be his mentors. The first was Jatin Mukherji (or Bagha Jatin) from his revolutionary nationalist period; the second was Lenin (...) The half was Josef Stalin..." Communism disregarded and hated man : Roy in his philosophy devised means to ensure human freedom and progress. Remembering Bagha Jatin who "personified the best of mankind", Roy worked "for the ideal of establishing a social order in which the best in man could be manifest." In 1947, he elaborated his theses into a manifesto, New Humanism, expected to be as important as the Communist Manifesto by Marx a century earlier.

SECOND WORLD WAR AND AFTER

With the declaration of War - close to Sri Aurobindo's position - Roy condemned the rising totalitarian Germany and Italy; he supported England and France to fight against fascism.; severed connection with the Congress; created his Radical Democratic Party (1940). Gandhi proceeded to foment "Quit India" in August 1942. Roy's line was clearly different from that of the mainstream of the national liberation movement. According to Roy, a victory

for Germany and the Axis powers would have resulted in the end of democracy worldwide and India would never be independent. In his view India could win her freedom only in a free world.

Sensing India's freedom to be a post-War reality following the defeat of the Axis powers and the weakening of British Imperialism, Roy wrote a series of articles in Independent India on the economic and political structures of new India, even presenting a concrete 10-year Plan, and drafting a Constitution of Free India (1944).

A lecture tour to the USA was to be suspended, as Roy died on 25 January 1954.

M. N. Roy (1887-1954) is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, Indian philosopher of twentieth century. Unlike some other Indian thinkers of twentieth century, Roy has made a clear distinction between philosophy and religion in his thought. This alone, I think, entitles him to be recognized as the foremost Indian philosopher of twentieth century. According to Roy, no philosophical advancement is possible unless we get rid of orthodox religious ideas and theological dogmas. On the other hand, Roy has envisaged a very close relationship between philosophy and science.

Secondly, Roy has given a central place to intellectual or philosophical revolution in his philosophy. According to Roy, a philosophical revolution must precede a social revolution.

Besides, Roy has, in the tradition of eighteenth century French materialist Holbach, revised and restated materialism in the light of twentieth century scientific developments. If we wish to place Roy's philosophy in the context of ancient Indian philosophy, we may place Roy in the tradition of the ancient Indian materialism, Lokayata or Charvaka. However, compared to the ancient doctrines of Lokayata, Roy's "physical realism" is a highly developed philosophy. Roy not only takes into account the then contemporary discoveries of physics in reformulating

"materialism" as "physical realism", but also gives an important place to ethics in his philosophy. Moreover, Roy's philosophy has an important social and political component, which is based on his criticism of communism and "formal" parliamentary democracy. Roy called this "new philosophy of revolution", which he developed in the later part of his life, "new humanism" or "radicalism". The essence of the philosophy of new humanism is contained in Roy's "Theses on the principles of Radical Democracy" or the "Twenty-two Theses of Radical Humanism". Roy further elaborated this philosophy in his New Humanism A Manifesto, first published in 1947.

M.N.Roy was not inclined to write his autobiography. However, after much persuasion he started writing his Memoirs in the last part of his life. Sadly, he was not able to complete it. This incomplete autobiography covers only a period of seven years from 1915 to 1922.

This brief life-sketch of M. N. Roy is based mainly on V.B. Karnik's M.N. Roy, Sibnarayan Ray's introduction to Selected Works of M.N. Roy (vol. 1) and V.M. Tarkunde's Radical Humanism. I have also derived some help from Essence of Royism, compiled by G.D. Parikh, and M.N. Roy Philosopher Revolutionary, edited by Sibnarayan Ray. Besides, I have also drawn heavily from my own book M.N. Roy's New Humanism and Materialism for writing this chapter.

M.N. Roy, whose original name was Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, was born on 21 March 1887, at Arbalia, a village in 24 Parganas district in Bengal. His father, Dinabandhu Bhattacharya, was head pandit of a local school. His mother's name was Basanta Kumari. From school going age, Roy lived in Kodalia, another village in 24 Parganas.

MILITANT NATIONALIST PHASE: IN SEARCH OF ARMS

Roy began his political career as a militant nationalist at the age of 14, when he was a school student. He joined an underground organization called Anushilan Samiti, and when

it was banned, he helped in organizing Jugantar Group under the leadership of Jatin Mukherji. In course of his underground work, he was involved in many political dacoities and conspiracy cases. In 1915, after the beginning of the First World War, Roy left India for Java in search of arms for organizing an armed insurrection for overthrow of British rule in India. However, the plan failed and Roy went a second time to Java for the same purpose. Thereafter, he moved from country to country, with faked passports and different names, in his attempt to secure German arms. Finally, after wandering through Malay, Indonesia, Indo-China, Philippines, Japan, Korea and China, in June 1916, he landed at San Francisco in United States of America.

Roy's attempts to secure arms ended in a failure. In fact, Roy concluded that Germans were not serious about giving arms to the Indian revolutionaries. Besides, police repression had shattered the underground organization, which Roy had left behind. He had also come to know about the death of his leader, Jatin Mukherji, in an encounter with police.

TOWARDS COMMUNISM

The news of Roy's arrival at San Francisco was somehow published in a local daily, forcing Roy to flee to Pao Alto, the seat of Stanford University. It was here that Roy, until then known as Narendra Nath Bhattacharya or Naren, changed his name to Manbendra Nath Roy. This change of name on the campus of Stanford University was like a new birth for Roy. As stated by him in his Memoirs, it enabled him to turn his back on a futile past and look forward to a new life of adventures and achievements.

Roy's host at Pao Alto introduced him to Evelyn Trent, a graduate student at Stanford University. Evelyn Trent, who later married Roy, became his political collaborator. She accompanied him to Mexico and Russia and was of great help to him in his political and literary work. The collaboration continued until they separated in 1929.

At New York, where he went from Pao Alto, Roy met Lala Lajpat Rai, the well-known nationalist leader of India. He developed friendships with several American radicals, and frequented the New York Public Library. Roy also went to public meetings with Lajpat Rai. Questions asked by the working class audience in these meetings made Roy wonder whether exploitation and poverty would cease in India with the attainment of independence. Roy began a systematic study of socialism, originally with the intention of combating it, but he soon discovered that he had himself become a socialist! In the beginning, nurtured as he was on Bankimchandra, Vivekanand and orthodox Hindu philosophy, Roy accepted socialism "except its materialist philosophy".

Later in Mexico in 1919, Roy met Michael Borodin, an emissary of the Communist International. Roy and Borodin quickly became friends, and it was because of long discussions with Borodin that Roy accepted the materialist philosophy and became a full-fledged communist. Roy was also instrumental in converting the Socialist Party of Mexico into the Communist Party of Mexico.

In 1920, Roy was invited to Moscow to attend the second conference of the Communist International. Roy had several meetings with Lenin before the Conference. He differed with Lenin on the role of the local bourgeoisie in nationalist movements. On Lenin's recommendation, the supplementary thesis on the subject prepared by Roy was adopted along with Lenin's thesis by the second conference of the Communist International. The following years witnessed Roy's rapid rise in the international communist hierarchy. By the end of 1926, Roy was elected member of all the four official policy making bodies of the Comintern the presidium, the political secretariat, the executive committee and the world congress.

In 1927, Roy was sent to China as a representative of the Communist International. However, Roy's mission in China ended in a failure. On his return to Moscow from China, Roy

found himself in official disfavor. In September 1929 he was expelled from the Communist International for "contributing to the Brandler press and supporting the Brandler organizations, …". Roy felt that he was expelled from the Comintern mainly because of his "claim to the right of independent thinking."

RETURN TO INDIA: PRISON YEARS

Roy returned to India in December 1930. He was arrested in July 1931 and tried for his role in the Kanpur Communist Conspiracy Case. He was sentenced to six years imprisonment.

When Roy returned to India, he was still a full-fledged communist, though he had broken from the Comintern. The forced confinement in jail gave him more time than before for systematic study and reflection. His friends in Germany, especially his future wife, Ellen Gottschalk, kept providing him books, which he wanted. His letters to her from jail, published subsequently as Letters from Jail (1943), contains pointers to his reading and thinking during those years.

Roy's had planned to use his prison years for writing a systematic study of 'the philosophical consequences of modern science', which would be in a way a re-examination and re-formulation of Marxism to which he had been committed since 1919. The reflections, which Roy wrote down in jail, grew over a period of five years into nine thick volumes (approximately over 3000 lined foolscap-size pages). The 'Prison Manuscripts' have not so far been published in their totality, and are currently preserved in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Archives in New Delhi.

However, selected portions from the manuscript were published as separate books in the 1930s and the 1940s Materialism (1940), Science and Superstition (1940), Heresies of the 20th Century (1939), Fascism (1938), The Historical Role of Islam (1939), Ideal Of Indian Womanhood (1941), Science and Philosophy (1947) and India's Message (1950) are among the books that were made from these handwritten notebooks.

These writings show that Roy was not satisfied with a primarily economic explanation of historical processes. He studied and tried to assess the role of cultural and ideational factors in traditional and contemporary India, in the rise and expansion of Islam, and in the phenomenon of fascism. He was particularly severe on the obscurantist professions and practices of neo-Hindu nationalism. Roy tried to reformulate materialism in the light of latest developments in the physical and biological sciences. He was convinced that without the growth and development of a materialist and rationalist outlook in India, neither a renaissance nor a democratic revolution would be possible. In a way, seeds of the philosophy of new humanism, which was later developed fully by Roy, were already evident in his jail writings.

TOWARDS NEW HUMANISM

Immediately after his release from jail on 20 November 1936, Roy joined Indian National Congress along with his followers. He organized his followers into a body called League of Radical Congressmen. However, in December 1940, Roy and his followers left Congress owing to differences with the Congress leadership on the role of India in the Second World War. Thereafter, Roy formed the Radical Democratic Party of his own. This signaled the beginning of the last phase of Roy's life in which he developed his philosophy of new humanism.

After Roy's release from jail in 1936, Ellen Gottschalk joined Roy in Bombay in March 1937. They were married in the same month. Subsequently, Ellen Roy played an important role in Roy's life, and cooperated in all his endeavors.

In 1944, Roy published two basic documents, namely, People's Plan for Economic Development of India and Draft Constitution of Free India. According to V.M. Tarkunde, who played a role in drafting 'People's Plan', these "documents contained Roy's original contributions to the solution of country's economic and political problems". The Indian state, according

to the draft constitution, was to be organized on the basis of countrywide network of people's committees having wide powers such as initiating legislations, expressing opinion on pending bills, recall of representatives and referendum on important national issues. According to Sibnarayan Ray, another prominent associate of Roy, "the Plan and the Constitution anticipated several of the principles which were to be formulated and developed as Radical Humanism in 1949 and the subsequent years".

BEYOND COMMUNISM: 22 THESES ON RADICAL HUMANISM

Roy prepared a draft of Basic principles of Radical Democracy before the All India Conference of Radical Democratic Party held in Bombay in December 1946. The draft, in which basic ideas were put in the form of theses, was circulated among a small number of selected friends and associates of Roy including Laxman Shastri Joshi, Philip Spratt, V.M. Tarkunde, Sibnarayan Ray, G.D. Parikh, G.R. Dalvi and Ellen Roy. The "22 Theses" or "Principles of Radical Democracy", which emerged as a result of intense discussions between Roy and his circle of friends, were adopted at the Bombay Conference of the Radical Democratic Party. Roy's speeches at the conference in connection with the 22 Theses were published later under the title Beyond Communism.

In 1947, Roy published New Humanism A Manifesto, which offered an elaboration of the 22 Theses. The draft of the manifesto was prepared by Roy, but, as Roy himself says, in the preface of New Humanism, he derived help from valuable suggestions of Philip Spratt, Sikander Choudhary and V.M.Tarkunde in improving his draft. The ideas expressed in the manifesto were, according to Roy, "developed over a period of number of years by a group of critical Marxists and former Communists."

Further discussions on the 22 Theses and the manifesto led Roy to the conclusion that party-politics was inconsistent with

his ideal of organized democracy. This resulted in the dissolution of the Radical Democratic Party in December 1948 and launching of a movement called the Radical Humanist Movement. At the Calcutta Conference, itself where the party was dissolved, theses 19 and 20 were amended to delete all references to party. The last three paragraphs of the manifesto were also modified accordingly. Thus, the revised versions of the 22 Theses and the manifesto constitute the essence of Roy's New Humanism.

INDIAN RENAISSANCE INSTITUTE

In 1946, Roy established Indian Renaissance Institute at Dehradun. Roy was the founder-director of the Institute. In a statement prepared in 1952, Roy described the Institute as "a cultural-educational organization founded with the object of re-educating the educators and young intellectuals of India in spirit and with the ideas of Radical (or Integral) Humanism."

Since 1937, Roy was editing a new weekly named Independent India. In 1949, Independent India weekly changed to The Radical Humanist weekly. The name of another quarterly journal The Marxian Way, which Roy had been publishing since 1945 in collaboration with Sudhindranath Datta, was changed to The Humanist Way in the same year.

REASON, ROMANTICISM AND REVOLUTION

In 1948, Roy started working on his last major intellectual project. Roy's magnum opus Reason, Romanticism and Revolution is a monumental work (638 pages). The fully written, revised and typed press copy of the book was ready in April 1952.

It attempted to combine a historical survey of western thought with an elaboration of his own system of ideas. As Roy says in the preface of the book: "On the basis of a humanist interpretation of cultural history, this work endeavors to outline a comprehensive philosophy which links up social and political practice with a scientific metaphysics of rationality and ethics."

INTERNATIONAL HUMANIST AND ETHICAL UNION

While working on Reason, Romanticism and Revolution, Roy had established contacts with several humanist groups in Europe and America, which had views similar to his own. The idea gradually evolved of these groups coming together and constituting an international association with commonly shared aims and principles. The inaugural congress of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) was planned to be organized in Amsterdam in 1952, and Roys were expected to play an influential role in the congress and in the development of the IHEU.

However, before going abroad, Roy needed some rest. He along with Ellen Roy went up for a few days from Dehradun to the hill station of Mussoorie. On June 11 1952, Roy met a serious accident. He fell fifty feet down while walking along a hill track. He was moved to Dehradun for treatment. On 25 August, he had an attack of cerebral thrombosis resulting in a partial paralysis of the right side. The accident prevented the Roys from attending the inaugural congress of the IHEU, which was held in August 1952 at Amsterdam. The congress, however, elected M.N. Roy, in absentia, as one of its vice-presidents and made the Indian Radical Humanist Movement one of the founder-members of the IHEU. On 15 August 1953, Roy had the second attack of cerebral thrombosis, which paralyzed the left side of his body. Roy's last article dictated to Ellen Roy for the Radical Humanist was about the nature and organization of the Radical Humanist Movement. This article was published in the Radical Humanist on 24 January 1954. On 25 January 1954, ten minutes before midnight, M.N. Roy died of a heart attack. He was nearly 67 at that time.

PUBLICATIONS

Roy was a prolific writer. He wrote many books, edited, and contributed to several journals. The Oxford University Press has published four volumes of Selected Works of M.N. Roy, edited

by Sibnarayan Ray. We have already mentioned some of his works related to the final humanist phase of his life. Of these Materialism, Science and Philosophy, New Humanism and Reason, Romanticism and Revolution are of special interest to us.

ROY'S CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY

Roy has discussed the nature of philosophy and its relationship with religion and science in his books Materialism and Science and Philosophy. "Philosophy", says Roy, quoting Pythagoras, in his book Materialism, is "contemplation, study and knowledge of the nature". Its function is "to know things as they are, and to find the common origin of the diverse phenomena of nature, in nature itself".

"Philosophy", according to Roy, "begins when man's spiritual needs are no longer satisfied by primitive natural religion which imagines and worships a variety of gods as personification of the diverse phenomena of nature. The grown-up man discredits the nursery-tales, with which he was impressed in his spiritual childhood ... Intellectual growth impels and emboldens him to seek in nature itself the causes of all natural phenomena; to find in nature a unity behind its diversity."

In his book Science and Philosophy, Roy defines philosophy as "the theory of life". The function of philosophy, in words of Roy, "is to solve the riddle of the Universe". Elaborating on his definition of philosophy, Roy says:

Philosophy is the theory of life, because it was born of the efforts of man to explain nature and to understand his own being in relation to its surroundings; to solve the actual problems of life in the light of past experiences, so that the solution will give him an encouraging glimpse into the future.

PHILOSOPHY AND METAPHYSICS

Roy has made a distinction between philosophy and metaphysics. According to him, metaphysics, too, begins with

the desire to discover unity behind the diversity. But it leaves the ground of Philosophy in quest of a noumenon above and beyond nature, something which is distinct from phenomena. Thus it abandons the inquiry into what really exists with the object of acquiring knowledge about it, and plunges into the wilderness of speculation. It takes up the absurd task of knowing the intangible as the condition for the knowledge of the tangible.

It is obvious that Roy was opposed to speculative philosophy, which set for itself the impossible task of prying into the transcendental being "above and behind" the physical universe of acquiring the knowledge of the reality behind the appearance. In words of Roy:

Speculative philosophy is the attempt to explain the concrete realities of existence in the light of a hypothetical absolute. It is the way not to truth, but to dream; not to knowledge but to illusion. Instead of trying to understand the world, the only reality given to man, speculative philosophy ends in denying of the existence of the only reality and declaring it to be a figment of man's imagination. An inquiry which denies the very existence of the object to be enquired, is bound to end in idle dreams and hopeless confusion.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Roy is opposed not only to speculative philosophy but also to the identification of philosophy with theology and religion. As he says in Science and Philosophy:

For the average educated man, the term philosophy has a very vague meaning, but sweeping application; it stands not only for speculative thought, but also for poetic fancy. In India, particularly, this vague, all-embracing sense is generally prevalent. Philosophy is not distinguished from religion and theology. Indeed, what is believed to be the distinctive feature of Indian philosophy is that it has not broken away from the medieval tradition, as modern western philosophy did in the seventeenth century.

According to Roy, "Faith in the supernatural does not permit the search for the causes of natural phenomena in nature itself. Therefore, rejection of orthodox religious ideas and theological dogmas is the condition for philosophy."

"With the assumption that the phenomena of nature are determined by the will of some supernatural being or beings," says Roy, "philosophy must make room for faith." What is supernatural, points out Roy, must be always beyond the understanding of man, who is himself a product of nature, and is, therefore, limited by the laws of nature. In this way, according to Roy, "as soon as the cause of the phenomenal world is thus placed beyond the realm of human knowledge, the world itself becomes incomprehensible."

Roy is of the view that, "religion is bound to be liquidated by science, because scientific knowledge enables mankind to answer questions, confronted by which in its childhood, it was compelled to assume super-natural forces or agencies."

Therefore, according to Roy, in order to perform its function, "philosophy must break away from religion" and start from the reality of the physical universe.

PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

On the one hand, Roy regards rejection of orthodox religious ideas and theological dogmas as the essential condition of philosophy, and on the other, he envisages a very intimate relationship between philosophy and science. In fact, according to Roy, the philosophical significance of modern scientific theory is to "render the old division of labor between science and philosophy untenable." Science is, says Roy, "stepping over the old boundary line.

Digging deeper and deeper into the secrets of nature, science has come up against problems the solution of which was previously left to philosophy. Scientific inquiry has pushed into what is traditionally regarded as the 'metaphysical' realm."

The problems of philosophy cosmological, ontological and epistemological can all be progressively solved, according to Roy, in the light of scientific knowledge. The function of philosophy is, points out Roy, to explain existence as a whole. An explanation of existence requires knowledge of existence, knowledge about the different phases of existence is gathered by the various branches of science. Therefore, in words of Roy:

The function of philosophy is to coordinate the entire body of scientific knowledge into a comprehensive theory of nature and life.

Even in his Scientific Politics, which is more in the nature of a popular lecture than a philosophical treatise, Roy says, "having thus yielded position to science, philosophy can now exist only as the science of sciences a systematic coordination, a synthesis of all positive knowledge, continuously readjusting itself to progressive enlargement of the store of human knowledge." Such a philosophy, according to Roy, has "nothing in common with what is traditionally known, particularly in this country, as philosophy. A mystic metaphysical conception of the world is no longer to be accorded the distinction of philosophy."

In Reason, Romanticism and Revolution, too, Roy repeats his conception of philosophy as a logical coordination of all the branches of positive knowledge in a system of thought to explain the world rationally and to serve as a reliable guide for life.

Thus, Roy has given a secular and modern definition of philosophy. We have noted in the preface that in twentieth century the academic Indian philosophy, as taught and studied in Indian universities, has been dominated by Hindu religion, particularly advaita vedanta, in one way or another. This has been largely owing to the pervasive influence of S. Radhakrishnan. At least in twenty-first century, Indian "philosophy" must make a clean break from religion, and stop projecting "religion" as "philosophy". Otherwise, the future of

"Indian philosophy" will remain bleak. Roy needs to be commended for making a clear distinction between philosophy and religion.

ROY'S MATERIALISM OR PHYSICAL REALISM

M.N. Roy was a strong supporter of materialist philosophy. In his book Materialism, Roy says:

Strictly speaking, philosophy is materialism, and materialism is the only possible philosophy. For, it represents the knowledge of nature as it really exists knowledge acquired through the contemplation, observation and investigation of the phenomena of nature itself.

According to Roy, materialism is not the monstrosity it is generally supposed to be. It is not the cult of "eat, drink and be merry", as it has been depicted by its ignorant or malicious adversaries. It simply maintains that "the origin of everything that really exits is matter, that there does not exist anything but matter, all other appearances being transformation of matter, and these transformations are governed necessarily by laws inherent in nature." Thus, broadly speaking, Roy's philosophy is in the tradition of materialism. However, there are some important differences between Roy's materialism and traditional materialism. In fact, Roy's "materialism" is a restatement of traditional materialism in the light of then contemporary scientific knowledge.

As Roy says:

The substratum of the Universe is not matter as traditionally conceived: but it is physical as against mental or spiritual. It is a measurable entity. Therefore, to obviate prejudiced criticism, the philosophy hitherto called materialism may be renamed Physical Realism. (emphasis mine)

Restatement of Traditional Materialism

According to Roy, "materialism must be dissociated from certain notions which have been rendered untenable by the latest discoveries of science." Roy's revision and restatement of materialism embraces both the basic tenets of materialism. He has revised the concept of matter as well as that of physical determinism.

Change in the Concept of Matter

According to Roy, the discoveries of quantum physics have "made the classical notion of matter untenable". Nevertheless, Roy insists that though the substratum of the universe is "not matter as traditionally conceived" it is "physical as against mental or spiritual. It is a measurable entity".

The so-called "crisis" of materialism, according to Roy, involved the conception of matter, and not its existence. The "crisis" simply exposed the inadequacy of the old atomist theory.

The substance of the "crisis" was, in words of Roy, "that it appeared to reduce matter from mass to energy and radiation". However, emphasizes Roy, there cannot be any doubt about the fact that "atomic physics deals with material realities which exist objectively, outside the mind of the physicist." (emphasis mine)

Thus, in Roy's physical realism "matter" is not made up of hard and massy stone-like atoms as in traditional "mechanical materialism". The whole concept of "matter" has been revised in the light of new physics. In fact, Roy was even ready to discard the term "matter" provided a more appropriate new term could be coined.

In Science and Philosophy, Roy describes "matter" as the "sole-existence". According to Roy, it is not very important what name is attached to the "substratum of existence" matter, energy, action, vibratory motion or field. But he insists that it is a physical reality. What Roy means by calling it physical is that it exists objectively and that it is measurable. As we have seen, Roy has even renamed his revised version of materialism as "physical realism".

Revision of Physical Determinism in light of Heisenberg's Principle

Roy disagrees with the view of some thinkers that Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty necessitates the rejection of the doctrine of determinism. According to Roy, only a modification in the traditional conception of causality is required. Causality, in Roy's view, is not an a priori form of thought or an axiomatic law; it is physical relation inherent in the constitution of the universe.

Roy, in fact, tries to temper rigidly mechanical view of determinism by interpreting it in terms of probability. He admits plurality of possibilities and the element of contingency in the world, and tries to show that determinism and probability are not mutually exclusive. However, Roy insists that statistical methods presuppose determinism. The universe is a law-governed system, and the existence of law presupposes causality. He is emphatic that the element of uncertainty in the sub-atomic world is not to be equated with indeterminacy. Rejection of the idea that there are invariant relations in nature, maintains Roy, will blast the very foundation of science.

"SOFT" DETERMINISM

Roy also tries to reconcile freedom of will with determinism. According to him, human beings possess free will and can choose out of various alternatives in front of them. Roy, however, is not unique among materialists in recognizing free will. Epicures, among ancient Greek materialists, and Hobbes, among modern materialists, tried to accommodate free will in their philosophies. According to Roy, the vast world of biological evolution lies between the world of human beings and the world of inanimate matter, and, therefore, the world of human beings has its own specific laws, though these laws can be referred back to the general laws of the world of dead matter. Nevertheless, human will, says Roy, cannot be directly related to the laws of physical universe. Thus, Roy is not, to use the terminology of William

James, a "hard" determinist like Holbach, but a "soft" determinist like Hobbes.

Objective Reality of Ideas and the Autonomy of the Mental World

Though Roy traces the origin of mental activities to the physical background of the living world, yet he also grants them an objective existence of their own. "Mind and matter", according to Roy, "can be reduced to a common denominator; as such, they are two objective realities." In Roy's view, once formed, ideas exist by themselves, governed by their own laws. Thus, Roy grants much more objectivity and autonomy to the mental world than has been traditionally granted by materialists. Roy's materialism is not an "extreme" materialism like that of the eighteenth century French materialist, Julien de la Mettrie, who regarded man to be a self-moving machine. According to Roy, on the other hand, "Man is not a living machine, but a thinking animal".

EMPHASIS ON ETHICS

Roy has given a very important place to ethics in his philosophy. According to Roy, "the greatest defect of classical materialism was that its cosmology did not seem to have any connection with ethics". Roy strongly asserts that if it is not shown that materialist philosophy can accommodate ethics, then, human spirit, thirsting for freedom, will spurn materialism. In Roy' view materialist ethics is not only possible but materialist morality is the noblest form of morality. Roy links morality with human being's innate rationality. Man is moral, according to Roy, because he is rational. In Roy's ethics freedom, which he links with the struggle of existence is the highest value. Search for truth is a corollary to the quest for freedom.

However, Roy is not unique among materialists in emphasizing the importance of ethics in his philosophy. Contrary to popular impression, ancient materialist Epicures and modern materialist Holbach, for example, accorded an important place

to ethics in their philosophies. However, the details of Roy's ethics are somewhat different from these philosophies.

ROY'S PHYSICAL REALISM AND MARXIAN MATERIALISM

Roy, before he formulated and expounded his own philosophy of New Humanism, was an orthodox Marxist. In fact, Roy's revision of materialism was carried out in the context of Marxism. Thus, Roy's revision of materialism in general is also applicable to Marxian materialism to the extent Marxian materialism resembles traditional materialism.

Roy's Physical Realism is, however, different from Marxian materialism in particular in three important ways. Firstly, Roy considers the Hegelian heritage a weak spot of Marxism. The simplicity and scientific soundness of materialism are marred, in Roy's view, by making its validity conditional upon dialectic. According to Roy, materialism pure, and simple, can stand on its own legs, and, therefore, he tries to de link dialectics from materialism. The validity of materialism, maintains Roy, is in no way conditional on dialectics, as there is no logical connection between the two.

Secondly, Roy rejects historical materialism and advocates a humanist interpretation of history in which he gives an important place to human will as a determining factor in history, and he recognizes the autonomy of the mental world. According to Roy, human will cannot be directly related to the laws of physical universe. Ideas, too, have an objective existence, and are governed by their own laws. The economic interpretation of history, in Roy's view is deduced from a wrong interpretation of materialism.

Thirdly, Roy's materialism is sharply different from Marxian materialism in so far it recognizes the importance of ethics and gives a prominent place to it. According to Roy, Marxian materialism wrongly disowns the humanist tradition and thereby divorces materialism from ethics. The contention that "from the scientific point of view this appeal to morality and justice does not help us an inch farther" was based, according to Roy, upon a false notion of science.

New Humanism

"New Humanism" is the name given by Roy to the "new philosophy of revolution" which he developed in the later part of his life. As pointed out earlier, the philosophy has been summarized by Roy in the "Twenty-Two Theses" and elaborated in his New Humanism A Manifesto.

New Humanism, as presented in the Twenty- Two Theses, has both a critical and a constructive aspect. The critical aspect consists of describing the inadequacies of communism (including the economic interpretation of history), and of formal parliamentary democracy. The constructive aspect, on the other hand, consists of giving highest value to the freedom of individuals, presenting a humanist interpretation of history, and outlining a picture of radical or organized democracy along with the way for achieving the ideal of radical democracy.

Apart from Roy's effort to trace the quest for freedom and search for truth to the biological struggle for existence, the basic idea of the first three theses of Roy is: individualism. According to Roy, the central idea of the Twenty-Two Theses is that "political philosophy must start from the basic idea that the individual is prior to society, and freedom can be enjoyed only by individuals".

Quest for freedom and search for truth, according to Roy, constitute the basic urge of human progress. The purpose of all-rational human endeavor, individual as well as collective, is attainment of freedom in ever increasing measure. The amount of freedom available to the individuals is the measure of social progress. Roy refers quest for freedom back to human being's struggle for existence, and he regards search for truth as a corollary to this quest. Reason, according to Roy, is a biological property, and it is not opposed to human will. Morality, which emanates from the rational desire for harmonious and mutually beneficial social relations, is rooted in the innate rationality of

man. In his humanist interpretation of history, presented in theses four, five and six, Roy gives an important place to human will as a determining factor, and emphasizes the role of ideas in the process of social evolution. Formation of ideas is, according to Roy, a physiological process but once formed, ideas exist by themselves and are governed by their own laws. The dynamics of ideas runs parallel to the process of social evolution and both of them influence each other. Cultural patterns and ethical values are not mere super structures of established economic relations. They have a history and logic of their own.

Roy's criticism of communism, contained in theses seven to eleven is based mainly on the experience of the former Soviet Union, particularly the "discrepancy between the ideal and the reality of the socialist order". According to Roy, freedom does not necessarily follow from the capture of political power in the name of the oppressed and the exploited classes and abolition of private property in the means of production. For creating a new world of freedom, says Roy, revolution must go beyond an economic reorganization of society. A political system and an economic experiment which subordinate the man of flesh and blood to an imaginary collective ego, be it the nation or class, cannot possibly be, in Roy's view, the suitable means for the attainment of the goal of freedom.

The Marxian doctrine of state, according to which the state is an instrument of exploitation of one class by another, is clearly rejected by Roy. According to Roy, the state is "the political organization of society" and "its withering away under communism is a utopia which has been exploded by experience".

Similarly, Roy rejects the communist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "Dictatorship of any form, however plausible may be the pretext for it, is," asserts Roy, "excluded by the Radical-Humanist perspective of social revolution".

Roy has discussed the shortcomings of formal parliamentary democracy in his twelfth and thirteenth theses. These flaws, according to Roy, are outcome of the delegation of power.

Atomized individual citizens are, in Roy's view, powerless for all practical purposes, and for most of the time. They have no means to exercise their sovereignty and to wield a standing control of the state machinery.

"To make democracy effective," says Roy, "power must always remain vested in the people and there must be ways and means for the people to wield sovereign power effectively, not periodically, but from day to day." Thus, Roy's ideal of radical democracy, as outlined in theses fourteen to twenty-two consists of a highly decentralized democracy based on a network of people's committee's through which citizens wield a standing democratic control over the state.

Roy has not ignored the economic aspect of his ideal of radical democracy. According to Roy, progressive satisfaction of the material necessities is the pre-condition for the individual members of society unfolding their intellectual and other finer human potentialities. According to him, "an economic reorganization, such as will guarantee a progressively rising standard of living, is the foundation of the Radical Democratic State. Economic liberation of the masses is an essential condition for their advancing towards the goal of freedom."

The ideal of radical democracy will be attained, according to Roy, through the collective efforts of mentally free men united and determined for creating a world of freedom. They will function as the guides, friends and philosophers of the people rather than as their would-be rulers. Consistent with the goal of freedom, their political practice will be rational and, therefore, ethical. According to Roy:

The function of a revolutionary and a social philosophy is to lay emphasis on the basic fact of history that man is maker of his world… The brain is a means of production, and produces the most revolutionary commodity. Revolutions presuppose iconoclastic ideas. An increasingly large number of men conscious of their creative power, motivated by the indomitable will to remake the world, moved by the adventure of ideas, and fired

with the ideal of a free society of free men, can create the condition under which democracy will be possible.

Roy categorically asserts that a social renaissance can come only through determined and widespread endeavor to educate the people as regards the principles of freedom and rational co-operative living. Social revolution, according to Roy, requires a rapidly increasing number of men of the new renaissance, and a rapidly expanding system of people's committees and an organic combination of both. The program of revolution will similarly be based on the principles of freedom, reason and social harmony.

As pointed out by Roy himself in his preface to the second edition of the New Humanism: A Manifesto, though new humanism has been presented in the twenty-two theses and the Manifesto as a political philosophy, it is meant to be a complete system. Because of being based on the ever-expanding totality of scientific knowledge, new humanism, according to Roy, cannot be a closed system. "It will not be", says Roy, "a dogmatic system claiming finality and infallibility." Roy also declares, "the work and progress of the Radical Humanist Movement will no longer be judged in terms of mass following, but by the spread of the spirit of freedom, rationality and secular morality amongst the people, and in the increase of their influence in the state."

According to Roy:

> *To consolidate the intellectual basis of the movement, Radicals will continue to submit their philosophies to constant research, examine it in the light of modern scientific knowledge and experience, and extend its application to all the social sciences. They will, at the same time, propagate the essentials of the philosophy amongst the people as a whole by showing its relevance to their pressing needs. They will make the people conscious of the urge for freedom, encourage their self-reliance and awaken in them the sense of individual dignity, inculcate the values of rationalism and secular morality, and spread the spirit of cosmopolitan Humanism. By showing the people the way to solve their daily problems by popular initiative, the Radicals will combat ignorance, fatalism, blind faith and the sense of individual helplessness which are the basis of authoritarianism. They will put all the social traditions and institutions to the test of the humanist outlook.*

PHILOSOPHICAL REVOLUTION OR RENAISSANCE

It is obvious from the foregoing that Roy was a great supporter of philosophical revolution or renaissance, and he has given a central place to it in his radical humanism. Roy was an admirer of European renaissance and drew inspiration from it. For him, "the renaissance was the revolt of man against God and his agents on this earth". According to Roy, the renaissance "heralded the modern civilization and the philosophy of freedom". He strongly believed that India, too, needed a renaissance on rationalist and humanist lines. According to him, this was a necessary condition for democracy to function in a proper manner. As Roy says in his Reason, Romanticism and Revolution:

In the first place, there must be a conscious and integrated effort to stimulate amongst people the urge for freedom, the desire to rely upon themselves, the spirit of free thinking and the will never to submit to any external authority by exchanging their freedom for the security of the slave. A new Renaissance based on rationalism and cosmopolitan Humanism is essential for democracy to be realized. (emphasis mine)

As mentioned earlier, according to Roy, a philosophical revolution must precede a social revolution. He was opposed to blind faith and superstitions of all kinds and supported rationalism. As a physical realist, he rejected all allegedly supernatural entities like god and soul. Similarly, he was opposed to fatalism and the doctrine of karma. He unequivocally rejected the religious mode of thinking and advocated a scientific outlook and a secular morality. As noted earlier, he was in favor of de linking philosophy with religion and associating it closely with

science. He believed that science would ultimately liquidate religion. Thus, though Roy primarily used the label of "humanist", he was also a rationalist and an atheist. He considered the promotion of rationalism and atheism as part of his humanist movement.

As he says in Beyond Communism:

> *A philosophical revolution must precede any radical social transformation…The belief in god and fate is the strongest link in the chain of the slavery of the Indian people…The Radical Democratic Movement will be the school to teach the Indian people to revolt against fate and the God or gods who preside over it.*

As mentioned earlier, according to Roy, "A revolutionary is one who has got the idea that the world can be remade, made better than it is to-day, that it was not created by a supernatural power, and therefore, could be remade by human efforts."

Further, according to Roy, "the idea of improving upon the creation of God can never occur to God-fearing. We can conceive of the idea only when we know that all gods are our own creation, and we can depose whomsoever we have enthroned."

Roy's critical approach towards religion comes out very clearly in the preface of his book, India's Message, where he asserts that "a criticism of religious thought, subjection of traditional beliefs and the time-honored dogmas of religion to a searching analysis is a condition for the belated Renaissance of India. The spirit of inquiry should overwhelm the respect for tradition."

According to Roy, "a critical examination of what is cherished as India's cultural heritage will enable the Indian people to cast off the chilly grip of a dead past. It will embolden them to face the ugly realities of a living present and look forward to a better, brighter and pleasanter future."

Thus, Roy was opposed to an uncritical and vain glorification of India's so-called "spiritual" heritage. However, he did not

stand for a wholesale rejection of ancient Indian thought either. He favored a rational and critical approach towards ancient traditions and thoughts.

Roy believed that the object of European renaissance was to rescue the positive contributions of ancient European civilization, which were lying buried in the Middle Ages owing to the dominance of the Church. Roy had something similar in his mind about India. According to him, one of the tasks of the Renaissance movement should be to rescue the positive outcome and abiding contributions of ancient thought contributions which just like the contributions of Greek sages are lying in ruins under the decayed structure of the Brahmanical Society the tradition of which is erroneously celebrated as the Indian civilization.

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M. N. Roy's Political Writings

HUNGER AND REVOLUTION IN INDIA

The absolute control of the means of communication by the Governments of the victorious Powers has prevented the general public from knowing anything which might prove disagreeable for those powerful nations which hold undisputed sway over the earth and the millions of human beings that inhabit it.

Because England has captured every route by which news could filter out of India, the world knows only what England wishes of the present condition of the Indian people. As a result of this policy, in force even before the war, there was a prevalent belief among the people of the western hemisphere that the benevolent (?) administration of India by the English had resulted in all the benefits of peace and prosperity for that remote nation. Imperialist propagandists have been telling the general public for the past fifty years that before the advent of the British the Indian people had never enjoyed these blessings, and that under their amiable protection 350 million Indians live in contentment and happiness. But the time has come in which world events move so swiftly that even the stifled voice of India's starving millions reaches to the remotest corners of the earth. The barbarous crimes committed by the English in India for more than a century and a half have reached their climax, and even the all-powerful hand of "perfidious Albion" finds itself unable to keep the world any longer in ignorance of the shocking reality.

At the present moment, India is stricken by famine such as was never known before, even in her long, and tragic history of famines under British rule. The causes of this terrible epidemic are the economic exhaustion of the people and the exportation of all foodstuffs to feed the Allied armies during the four years of the war.

To the mingled cries of the dying masses, the British Government has responded with bombs and bayonet, and the passage of even stricter and more repressive laws to prevent the voice of an oppressed people reaching the outer world in its appeal for help. The few notices published in the American and Canadian Press testify that conditions in India have acquired alarmingly critical proportions. The whole country is in a state of rebellion, and the British Government is using all of its powers to suppress the uprising of a people that has been crushed beneath a tyranny without precedent in the annals of the civilised world.

Early in April, the revolution burst forth simultaneously in the four greatest provinces of the Indian Empire; in Bengal, Bombay, the Punjab, and the United Provinces, which together form almost two-thirds of the country. Hundreds of lives have been lost on both sides, that of the Government as well as that of the revolutionists. The ancient city of Amritsar was one of the centres where the fighting first began; it was besieged by English troops, which bombarded the entire population from airplanes, killing hundreds of innocent people, and partially destroying the great Temple of Gold, sacred to the Sikhs and a marvellous architectural monument.

In all parts of the country English banks were sacked by the revolutionists. The northern part of Calcutta, the greatest metropolis of India, was in their control for four days. The principal industrial and commercial cities such as Bombay, Ahamedabad, Lahore, Delhi, the seat of the Viceroy, Allahabad; Gujranwala, etc., were converted into battle-grounds between the totally disarmed people and on the other the military forces

of the Government, completely equipped with machine guns, armoured cars, and aeroplanes from which bombs were hurled upon the masses of helpless men, women, and children.

All the different elements which form the Indian nation, the Hindus, Sikhs, Mohammedans, and other great communities, have united themselves in determined opposition to the British tyranny which has subjected the entire people to a veritable reign of terror with its recent repressive legislation and merciless enforcement of martial law. The repressive measures, known as the Rowlatt Acts, were passed three months ago in face of the unanimous opposition of the Indian people. By these Acts, liberty of press, of speech, and of platform and meeting are absolutely destroyed. The purpose of the Rowlatt Acts, frankly admitted, is to kill the revolutionary spirit awake in the people. According to the very confession of the British Government, the Indian people are striving for liberty, and the only thing which makes them submit to foreign yoke is the brute force of their oppressors.

For four years India has agonised through one of the worst famines known in history. Now that the war is over, and everyone seeks to improve the condition of the devastated countries of Europe conditions in India have become worse. Even the Christian missionaries who constitute the most sworn and vociferous defenders of British Imperialism in India have united in demanding that the poor infidels must be given food before they can be saved for Christ.

A press correspondent of the "Globe," Toronto, Canada, writes the following:

"India is in the deadly grip of plague and famine. In the Central and Northern provinces, death stalks through the land, taking a toll that makes the great war casualty list sink into insignificance. To date, the estimated number of dead from plague and famine in the past year is over 32,000,000 people. The poor have eaten all their food and the physical condition of thousands upon thousands is such that they are too weak even to carry their water-jars. Some conception of the awful death-roll may be gathered from the following comparison: If coffins for the 30,000,000 British Indian subjects who have died during the last year through plague and famine were placed, head to feet, they would reach a distance equal to one and one-third times around the equator. Words fail to portray the ghastliness of this stupendous tragedy, and photographs are too gruesome to publish."

The "London Times" admits "India has been swept bare of food-stuffs to meet the exigencies of the war." According to Government statistics, exports of cereals in 1917-18 rose to 5,400,000 tons valued at £36,000,000. For the same year, wheat to the amount of 1,500,000 tons was exported. In 1919 "India's contribution of food-stuffs was maintained at an even higher level than in 1917-18." During this period the country was ravaged by famine and epidemics incident to famine.

In spite of the fact that many notices have found their way to the press of the United States, of famine conditions in. India, the people there up to the present moment have contributed very little to alleviate the terrible conditions brought on by enforced contribution to the "war of liberty." In the latter part of May a few Canadian newspapers issued an appeal for funds to succour the dying millions in India, but this appeal was immediately suppressed by order of the Government, which has since allowed no news to be printed about India.

India, the land of proverbial riches and opulence, fell under a curse when the voracious European exploiters came to her coasts in search of gain. Since the days of the East India Company down to the present moment, the Indian people have suffered from chronic famines, malnutrition and endemic diseases which are the inevitable results of such a condition. By nature, education and centuries of culture, the Indians as a race are peaceable and averse to shedding blood. English capitalists, taking advantage of this well-known characteristic, initiated a kind of exploitation, merciless, cruel and efficient, which is calculated to annihilate the entire Indian people. A system which succeeds in killing

32,000,000 human beings in a single year, speaks for itself without the need of additional damning facts. The people which rebels against further subjection to such a government should receive at least the moral support of the whole world.

English Imperialism is determined to suppress the just aspirations of the Indian people at whatever cost; without shame or compunction, it is employing all the weapons of modern warfare against a people completely disarmed for 50 years.

To maintain the Indian people in their present condition of hopeless slavery is a vital necessity for the future existence of the English capitalistic system; what the capitalists lose in their struggle with the British workers, they will more than recover by their ruthless exploitation of the helpless and miserable Indian labourers. Consequently, notwithstanding the fact that the English proletarian may gain something as a result of the war, he will never be able to overthrow his capitalist oppressors so long as the workers of India are theirs to exploit at pleasure. Unfortunately, this manifest fact is little considered or recognised by the English Labour Party, which in regard to its own affairs is extremely liberal, but which as regards British Imperialism in India, never goes farther than to recommend a more generous policy in the administration of that country.

Apparently, the English Labour Party cannot conceive the idea that England has no right whatever, either moral or political, to impose itself upon the Indian, however liberal its rule. Accepting Imperialism as right and necessary for the welfare and greatness of England, they prove themselves just as much imperialist as their masters. They, and the rest of the workers are still to learn that the struggle for Indian independence is not a local affair, having for its end and purpose the creation of another egoistic nationalism; the liberty of the Indian people is a factor in world politics, for India is the keystone of British Imperialism which constitutes the greatest and most powerful enemy of the Social and Economic Revolution that exists to-day. For such time as English capital retains in absolute possession

all the immense natural resources of India, with unlimited right to exploit its manpower, just so long will it continue intrenched in its power too firmly to be overthrown by the English proletariat.

And English capital is more than mere English capital - it represents at once the epitome and bulwark of the capitalist system throughout the world. Seen in this light, it becomes self-evident that the liberation of India is more than a mere act of abstract justice, it signifies a long step towards the redemption of the world from the jaws of the capitalist system. It is for this reason that no nation, no people or group of people, can afford to remain indifferent to the fate of India, to its cause of liberty, or to the suffering and struggle of those millions of Indians who to-day plead for the moral and material support of humanity.

THE AWAKENING OF THE EAST

The world revolution, in order to accomplish its great mission must cross the borders of the so called Western Countries where capitalism has reached its climax. Until very recently this truth was almost entirely unknown among the revolutionaries of Europe and America, who hardly gave a moment's thought to the social and economic conditions of the Asiatic generally. It was generally maintained that, owing to their industrial backwardness, the hundred's of millions of the masses in the East would not count for anything in the great struggle between the exploiter, and the exploited. Consequently the "World" of the world revolution was limited to Europe and America,

But revolution is the result of objective, conditions; it breaks out in the least suspected place if the dynamic forces are there. The inevitable result of oppression as that sooner or later the oppressed rebel. This is happening to-day in the Eastern countries, where the myriads of toilers, have been groaning under the same exploitation against which their more fortunate and less, downtrodden comrades of the Occident have been carrying on an heroic fight. The East is awakening: and who

knows if the formidable tide, that will sweep away the capitalist structure of Western Europe, may not come from there. This is not idle fancy, nor is it mere sentimental brooding. That the final success of the Social Revolution in Europe will depend greatly, if not entirely, on a simultaneous upheaval of the labouring masses of the Orient, can be proved scientifically.

The theory of over-production is very well known; it is equally well known and accepted by all exponents of the Proletarian Revolution that the highly centralised capitalist organisation will crumble under the insupportable weight of over-production. But all the European countries, where the system of large scale production has reached the highest perfection, have been for a considerably long time the home of overproduction. Nevertheless, these countries are still the strongest citadels of Capitalism. The easy solution of the problem of over-production they found in Imperialist extension-in carrying their standard of exploitation to the lands inhabited by peoples less politically conscious than their European fellows. These imperial possessions, rich in natural resources and replete with human labour, have furnished the European capitalists, since more than a quarter of a century ago, a tremendous super-profit in return for the over-production at home. Or in other words, colonial expansion has proved to/be a very powerful remedy (though only preventive) against the epidemic of over-production in which, Marx predicted, capitalism will perish.

As the rise of bourgeois democracy was destined to triumph over feudalism on Europe, so the exploited masses must eventually overthrow Capitalism. It dominates today over the whole human race, and wherever it went and thrived, it carried within its own organism the latent causes of its destruction in due time. It went to the far-off colonies and imperial possessions to escape the disaster of over-production. Even its bitterest enemies, for a long time, failed to understand the imperativeness of counteracting this strategic move. During almost a century World Capitalism kept on invigorating itself by sucking the blood of the colonial toilers. But along with the bloody sword of organised exploitation, it carried in its womb the incipient forces that were destined to rise against it and build the new society upon its ruins.

To-day these forces are manifesting themselves in the growing revolutionary fermentation among the Eastern peoples, who were considered till the other day negligible factors in the World Revolution. This awakening of the East must open a new vision before the revolutionary leaders of Europe. If ought to show them the way through which the retreat of the cunning enemy can be cut. A formidable upheaval of the colonial and "protected" peoples will take away from under the feet of Imperialist Capitalism, the rock of super-profit which has helped so far, hi; offset the effects of overproduction.

If the greatest prophet of human history is not to be proved false-if over-production is to be the grave of capitalist society, then the World Revolution must assume world-wide character. And, behold, it is rapidly pushing its way into the confines of the Asiatic countries inhabited by industrially backward peoples, because therein lies the most vulnerable spot of the enemy line. The disruption of Empire is the only thing that will complete the bankruptcy of European capitalism; and the revolutionary upheavals hi the Asiatic countries are destined to bring about the crumbling of the proud imperial structure of capitalism. So, the awakening of the East is perhaps the fifth act of the World Revolution.

INDIA IN A TRANSITION STAGE

The Growth of the Bourgeoisie

As we know, there is no feudalism in India. Feudalism in India was destroyed or, rather, shaken not by a violent revolution as in Europe, by a comparatively peaceful and slow process. Feudalism as the basis of social economy received its first blow-which was also its death-blow - the first years of the British rule (in the middle the 18th century) when the political power went

over to the representatives of the foreign bourgeoisie. As the British East India Company representing British commercial capital was seizing the supreme power in India, the foundations of the feudal system were shaken.

But it took the East India Company about a century to establish its rule over the whole country. Thus feudalism, though weakened, continued - at least formally - to exist all through this period. Already at, the very beginning of the British rule the right of landownership was by force or treachery taken from the Indian landowning class and handed over to the British Government. In other words, in lieu of the feudal lords, the representatives of British trade capital became owners of the land.

The unsuccessful revolution of 1857, known the Sepoy Rising, destroyed the last remnants of feudal power. It was the last attempt of the surviving feudal lords to regain their former power. It was a struggle for political supremacy between the dying feudal system and commercial capital which was just gaining a footing in the country.

When feudalism in Europe broke down under the pressure of the rising bourgeoisie, this great social struggle found an echo in India. However, during the century preceding this revolution, the normal economic development and the strengthening of the native bourgeoisie met with following obstacles. In the first place, it was impeded by the forcible export by the East India Company to England of over 70% of India's accumulated wealth, where it contributed to the further development of industry.

A second factor of considerable importance was the deliberate destruction of handicraft industry and the forcible expulsion of the handicraft artisans into the villages.

This prevented the artisans from becoming an integral part of the proletariat of modern machine industry, as it had been the case in Europe. In Europe also handicraft industry was destroyed about the same time; but while in Europe it gave way

to a higher form of production - to machinery which arose as a new social power - in India the destruction of handicraft industry came about by a forcible and deliberate process.

This branch died out but it was not in order to give way to a higher form of production in the country. The Indian artisans rather fell victim to England's historical growth. But, be that as it may the historical results were in general outline, identical: the political power went over to a new social class, which controlled the highest forms of production, and this undermined the feudal system, depriving it of the economic importance, and ruined handicraft industry. After the 1857 rising the whole country was subjected by capital. The government of India passed from the hands of the East India Company to the British Government.

The present population of India consists of four classes:

1. The landed aristocracy to whom there belong also the ruler's of so-called native India;
2. The bourgeoisie and the intellectuals;
3. The peasantry;
4. The working class, including the landless peasants.

Out of 17,328 big landowners 700 hold sway over native India. They are called vassals and enjoy the protection of the British Government. This native India ruled by the vassal lords comprises about one third of the whole country and extends over 709,555 square miles. The largest of these provinces, the Haiderabad or Nisam is as large as Italy and counts 13½ million inhabitants; the smallest consists of not more than five villages. The whole population of native India amounts to 72 millions, i.e. a little less than one quarter of India's total population. It was owing to these provinces being governed by the vassals that India used to be called a feudal country. In theory these vassals exert supreme power in their provinces, but in practice they are deprived of all power, and it would therefore be wrong to regard this fact as the basis of the social and economic structure

of the country. Moreover, the government of these provinces is naught but feudal in nature; not one of the ruling vassals descends from the feudal aristocracy which existed before the British conquest of India.

These "kings" and "princes" whose power does not extend beyond the narrow sphere of local government, are nothing but tools in the hands of the British Government. All the political and military power in "their" provinces is held by British capital, while trade and industry are in the hands of the native bourgeoisie.

As a matter of fact, the latter exercises greater influence over the local governments than does the central Government of India. All these provinces have their legislative councils, upon which the local commercial and agricultural classes are represented; of late the commercial bourgeoisie is rapidly acquiring a prominent part in them. However, the whole power practically lies in the hands of the Resident representing the British Government. At first these Residents were delegated to the courts of the Indian princes as envoys of the British Government, but, representing as they did a more advanced social class, the British bourgeoisie, in course of time they became absolute masters of those provinces. Thus, practically the whole political power belongs to the bourgeoisie, though some remnants of feudalism may still be found here and there.

In the local government of native India the progressive tendency of the bourgeoisie is more marked than British India. The percentage of illiterates is much smaller in such dominions as Maysore, Travangor, Baroda, Kochin etc. than in British India. Whereas in the latter primary education is not even free of charge, in most of native India it is both free and compulsory. The industrialisation of the country these last years has also been progressing more rapidly in native than in British India. The position of the peasants is the same in both parts of India. In brief, native India possesses as few remnants of feudalism as British India.

The princes of native India realise perfectly well that they are doomed and that it is only thanks to the British Government that they still keep their power. British rule in India had never rested on these fragments of extinct feudalism. Just the reverse; their existence in the social structure of India was kept up artificially by the Indian Government representing the British bourgeoisie. Realising that they owed their existence to the British rule, they have always been body and soul on the side of England and will doubtless support her in all emergencies, just as they did during the last war.

As to the other 16,628 big landowners out of the 17,328 mentioned above, they are also either directly or indirectly connected with the feudal lords who began to rule over India after the fall of the Mogul Empire. Together with the seven hundred native princes they form the native aristocracy of India. These aristocrats and their families count 541,175 persons out of the total population of 320 millions. According to the census returns of 1911 (we have no data for the years 1920-21) 8,500,000 persons live on ground-rent. Besides the above mentioned 541,175 persons belonging to the landed aristocracy, eight millions more hold land on terms of lease. They differ from the former group in that these hold the land as it were by tenure from the British Government, and their land is subject to the feudal law of succession, i. e. it passes from the father to the eldest son. The second group hold the land on the basis of temporary or eternal lease, the land being considered the property of the Government. The rent which they pay to the Government is in some cases fixed once for all, in others it is subject to periodical changes, corresponding to the changing land value.

This class of leaseholders or farmers takes its origin from the first days of British rule in India. It arose on the ruins of the Moslem Empire, even before British power was established, and its first representatives were the dignitaries of the last period of the Moslem administration. In the last decades of the 18th century the country experienced a number of famine years, called forth

by the deliberate destruction of handicraft industry; The unlimited export of foodstuffs, crop failures owing to unfavourable climatic conditions, the transition in many places to the cultivation of indigo and jute, and the considerable decrease of the cultivated area brought about by the civil war.

As a result thereof a considerable part of the peasantry had to bear the fetters of heavy indebtedness, and their land passed to the usurers and the Government officials who had accumulated a great wealth. The East India Company at that time had not enough human material at its disposal to keep down the discontented population with its own forces, and therefore it promoted the growth of this farmer class, leasing out to them land which belonged to the Government.

Thus the elements which might have gone to form a native bourgeoisie were drawn off the path of their natural evolution and turned into a farmer class. This was partly due also to the conquest of the political power by the foreign bourgeoisie, which assumed the right to exploit the whole country. But now that the British Government is forced to change its policy of crushing India's home industry, we see the new Indian bourgeoisie being recruited to a large extent from this farmer class. The small farmers think it more advantageous to give up their land and invest their money in commercial and industrial enterprises. This leads to the concentration of the land in the hands of big capital. We shall deal with this concentration in detail later on.

"'The second layer of the population of India - the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals - count 37 millions, including women and children (20 millions). In 1918-1919 the sum total of capital owned by this class was 640 million pounds st., invested partly in Government bonds (359 million pounds st.) and partly in various Companies' shares (225 millions). besides, considerable sums were invested in industrial concerns recently sprung up, such as 1,800 cotton ginning mills, iron end steel works, sugar works, rubber plantations, 500 rice mills, oil factories, printing shops, leather factories etc. A hundred years ago, in 1820, this class held

in Government bonds alone a capital of 20 million pounds st. There were no joint-stock companies in India at that time.

The Indian intelligentsia which, together with the progressive elements of the farmer class, forms the basis of the local bourgeoisie, is a child of the British Government. Already in the first years of its rule the British Government considered it more advantageous to fill the offices and the minor administrative posts with natives than to bring out people from England especially for this purpose. Moreover, it was important for the Britishers to have the support of the native elements in the local government machinery. The big British trading firms in India also required clerks and other employees who would be satisfied with a bad pay. In the early days of British rule about fifty native clerks could be hired for the same salary that would have had to be paid to a single British clerk called out from the Metropolis.

In view of this, in the twenties of the 19th century the Government began to open new schools, thus giving a strong impetus to the development of the local intellectual class, which soon exceeded in numbers all expectations of the foreign rulers. These intellectuals took complete hold of the medical, legal and teaching professions. At present the British have been completely ousted from these professions by the native intellectuals. According to the census returns of 1911, there were 7,973,662 persons engaged m these professions and occupying administrative posts. This number does not include the clerks and employees of private firms. The above mentioned professions proved pretty lucrative, and large sums were accumulated in the hands of the upper intellectual strata. In 1850, the sums accumulated by this group of the population and invested in Government securities totalled 69 million pounds st. In those days this was practically the only profitable way of investing one's capital, as there were no commercial companies, etc.

The sum total deposited in the national banks at that time equalled 15 million pounds st. Another profitable operation was to take land on lease. At that time the land was just slipping out

of the hands of the big farmers who were unable to pay the heavy land-taxes. The small farmers too were forced to give up their land, owing to their heavy indebtedness which made it impossible for them to make both ends meet. Thus a considerable part of the land changed hands, passing from the old conservative owners to the new progressive elements of the native intellectual class. This class of progressive farmers, a part of whom continue - along with their landownership - to exercise the highly lucrative liberal professions, is rapidly filling the ranks of the bourgeoisie proper, for, as large sums accumulate in their hands, these farmers-intellectuals are more and more frequently and extensively investing their capitals in industrial enterprises.

At present one can often meet big farmers in India who at the same time represent large manufacturing interests.

In the early days of British rule, trade and banking was carried on pretty extensively among the several governors of India. This inner trade was, however, completely ruined in the first half of the 19th century, when the newest banking system was introduced and British trading firms were established. As a result of this process the commercial class of India - once a pretty, considerable factor - was reduced to the level of small traders.

After 1860, internal trade was revived once more. This revival was brought about by the slow but steady penetration of European capital info the interior of the country - in search for raw materials and markets for European goods.

This fact, in its turn, led to the formation of a class of Indian middle-men. The growth of foreign trade enriched the native commercial class, which rapidly began to accumulate large capitals but since foreign trade and international banking were monopolised by foreign capital, the native trader had no immediate access to this sphere of interests. What was left to him were the industrial enterprises, and he directed thereto both his energy and capital. The first Indian cotton mill was established in Ahmedabad in 1851.

However, until 1880 Indian capital penetrated but slowly into industry. It was not until after that, year that the industrialisation of the country really began. In 1880 there were altogether 58 cotton mills in India, with a total capital of 3,800,000 pounds st., and 22 idle and textile factories with a capital of 22,246,000 pounds st. The total number of workers employed in these enterprises was 68,000, Besides the capital invested in these and other private industrial concerns - including internal trade and banking - the native capitalists held another 90 million pounds st. in savings 'banks' and joint-stock companies. Thus we see that towards the beginning of the eigthties Indian capital, as concentrated in the hands of the representatives of the liberal professions, Indian farmers and merchants, was ready to contribute its share to the industrialisation of the country.

But this was counteracted by the representatives of foreign capital, who looked upon India as a source of raw materials and a market for manufactured goods. Special taxes were imposed upon the native enterprises, hampering their development and frequently making them close down immediately after they had been started. Yet, notwithstanding the active opposition on the part of foreign capital, native enterprise continued to crop up and gained a firm fooling, for they had such advantages in their favour as the cheapness of local row materials and the possibility to employ cheap labour.

The native intellectual class having grown rich, and being deprived of the possibility to invest its capital profitably, became discontented with the British Government. Since they considered it beneath their dignity to engage in trade, and the industrial enterprises met with continual opposition from the authorities, landed property and Government securities remained the only objects for the investment of their capitals. The Government bonds yielding a very low interest - from 3 to 3½% - offered but little attraction to the rich intellectuals. Ground-rent did not yield much profit either. Native capital was shut out from the building of railways and street-cars, from mining, as well as

from the participation in other industries whose development the British Government did not interfere with. This whole sphere of industry as monopolised by British capital.

The liberal professions were overcrowded. Seeing all the roads blocked to them, the rich class of intellectuals naturally began to look upon the British Government as the cause of all their troubles, and decided to fight the Government. Thus it was the economic interests that made the bourgeoisie as born of the Indian intelligentsia begin the political struggle.

The earliest stage of this fight was the Indian National Congress which held its first session at Bombay in 1885, under the chairmanship of J. S. Vanarji, a rich lawyer who had invested all his savings in industrial and commercial enterprises. The new political movement set itself a clear aim: to destroy or, at least, curtail the power of the British Government which deliberately checked the economic development of the local bourgeoisie. This movement was headed by rich lawyers, merchants, manufacturers, physicians, etc., in short - by those progressive social elements who wished to be free to invest their capitals as they pleased.

Towards the close of the 19th century the power of Indian capital went on growing slowly but steadily, thanks to the excess of free capital and the ever growing proletariat. The ranks of the latter were swelled by the landless natives as well as by the artisans who had been deprived of their earnings. Native industry continued to develop and expand, notwithstanding all the obstacles that the British Government put in its way.

The big farmers of the Province of Bengal enjoy special privileges on the basis of the 1829 Act. Under this Act, they only pay a fixed land-tax, and no other taxes. Moreover, the Bengal Land Act grants the big farmers the right to hand over their land in life-rent to others. Thanks to these provisions, Bengal always held a prominent place in agriculture, and the ground-rent reached there a very high level.

However, the 1829 Act placed the British Government at a disadvantage, depriving it of the possibility directly to profit by the high ground-rent. In order to remove this "inconvenience", a division of Bengal was carried through in 1905. The Eastern half of the Province with its rich rice fields was placed under a newly established provincial government, and the latter was granted the right to revise the old system of taxation.

Thus a new conflict cropped up between the Government and the rich farmers. This conflict made the representatives of the landed property and the native capitalists join forces for the common fight against the British rule. In 1905 the political movement of the Indian bourgeoisie, voiced by the National Congress and supported by the progressive elements of the farmer class, took up the economic weapon of boycott against British capital. The twenty-sixth session of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta in 1905 declared the boycott of English to continue until the division of Bengal Act would be repealed.

The Indian bourgeoisie consisting of intellectuals, industrials, traders and Progressive farmers, had acquired such considerable power by that time that it was able to engage in an open fight against the monopoly of foreign capital. The number of factories had grown to 2,688 in 1905. Out of these factories 1970 were worked by steam or electricity, and in 718 enterprises the work was done without machines.

According to official data, the sum total of capital invested in shares of native industrial enterprises was equal to 57 million pounds st., i.e. almost ten times as much us in 1880. On the other hand, the sums invested in Government bonds totalled 94,616,740 pounds st., showing an increase of only 4 million pounds st. With the development of industry there also grew up banks founded on Indian capital. In 1905, nine such banks existed in India.

To justify the boycott, the theory was set forth that the growing industry required protection and encouragement in

order to increase the national wealth which was the only source for the improvement of the position of the masses. Indian industry was however, too young as yet to stand competition with British capital, and the boycott failed to attain its purpose. Nevertheless the Government was obliged to recognise the force of the Indian bourgeoisie. In 1909, a law was passed granting the bourgeoisie a certain share in the government of the country. For the first time during the whole period of British rule an Indian was appointed member of the Executive Committee of the Viceroy, - an office corresponding to that of a minister in an absolute monarchy.

The choice fell on one of the most prominent lawyers who was at the same time a rich farmer. The number of the members of the Legislative Councils, national as well as Provincial, was increased. A special Royal Commission was instructed to deal with the question of attracting a greater number of natives to the service. The year 1911 witnessed the completion of the first stage of the struggle started by the Indian bourgeoisie against the British Government: the Partition of Bengal Act was rescinded. With this first political victory the fighting spirit of the Indian bourgeoisie rose still higher. It persevered in the struggle, and a year later the Government, through the King himself - who had visited India specially with this purpose - promised to grant India self-government in the nearest future.

Together with its political victory the bourgeoisie continued to make headway in the economical sphere. It was particularly in the textile industry that the number of enterprises owned by natives grew rapidly. There had never been any British capital worth speaking of invested in this industry, and after 1905 it shrunk still more. The boycott movement gave a strong impetus to the development of Indian industry as a whole. A large number of new enterprises were started, and the old ones were enlarged and improved. Next to the textile industry, a considerable development was recorded in the following branches, coal mining, metal, paper-making, dying, soap-making, glass,

matches, flour-milling, oil manufacture etc. The iron and steel trade also progressed rapidly after the "Tata" Iron and Steel Mills Company with a capital of seven million pounds st. had been founded in 1907.

With the outbreak of the war, a new era set in for the Indian bourgeoisie. England, being obliged to mobilise all her industrial forces for the production of war munitions, had also to adapt a part of her merchant marine to the war requirements. All this, along with the submarine war, led to a considerable decrease of English export into India. Quite unexpectedly, the Indian manufacturers were thus placed in a favourable position. The competition of British capital, which tended to undermine Indian capital, ceased all at once, and a wide field of activity was opened up to the native manufacturers The British Government itself, which had up to that time relentlessly pursued the policy of crushing India's industry, now realised the necessity of changing ifs policy. Discontent had been growing in India since the very beginning of this century.

In the years preceding the war this disaffection became nationwide, on the one hand owing to the greater unity of the masses and, on the other hand, to the enormous growth of unemployment among the intellectuals, who found it more and more difficult to get occupation.

This is why at the beginning of the war the general feeling inside India gave cause for alarm. Attempts were even made to overthrow the British rule by armed insurrections. In the ranks of the Indian army too a spirit of mutiny was abroad. The political movement initiated by the rich intellectuals was joined by the so-called extremists whose ranks were swelled by the lower strata of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. Terroristic societies had been active in the political field since 1904. Now, however, it was not only secret revolutionary organisations that strove for the complete separation of India from the British Empire by means of a revolution, It was also the aim pursued by the numerous ranks of extremists forming the left wing of

the Indian National Congress. The political movement was supported by two factors: in the first place there was the powerful class of Indian capitalists who, having concentrated large capitals in their hands, strove to attain, if not the monopoly, at least a share in the exploitation of the natural resources and labour forces of the country; in the second place, there were growing destitution and unemployment brought about by extensive and intensive exploitation of the country by foreign capital which deliberately checked the industrial development of India. Both these factors worked against the British rule. Socially they represented interests diametrically opposed to each other, but in view of the common enemy they became temporary allies, Naturally the British Government directed all its efforts to break this alliance, The British Government decided to bribe if only a part of the bourgeoisie by means of political concessions. but the Indian bourgeoisie of 1919 was no longer the same that it had been in 1906. It could no longer be pacified with sham political and administrative privileges. It demanded economic concessions, it wanted to get its share in the exploitation of the country.

In the first years of the war Japan seized a considerable part of the Indian market which had formerly been supplied with English goods. The British capitalists now proved unable to oust Japanese goods from the Indian market. All these internal and external causes combined to make the British Government enter into an agreement with the Indian bourgeoisie. Once more India was promised home rule, provided she would help England in the war. As home rule meant a partial transference of the government of the country to the Indian bourgeoisie, it was but natural that this promise led to an active support of England by the propertied class of the Indian population.

This class gave up its political struggle and helped the British Government to recruit the Indian troops. In return for these valuable services the Government introduced in 1916 a 3½% import duty on cotton goods. This protection of India's chief

industry was such a considerable concession to the industrial bourgeoisie that the latter, in its turn, gladly aided the British Government to realise the 100 million pounds st., loan, as a gift to England. Thanks to the introduction of the cotton import duty, the shareholders' capital invested in the textile industry immediately rose to 24,500,000 pounds st. in 1917, and the number of mills was increased to 276.

In 1917 India. managed to produce all the yarn she required for her textile industry and half of the textile goods she needed.. Production in India in 1917 reached 94.6% of the total imports, whereas the pre-war home production had not exceeded 42% of the imports. In 1917 India produced 1,614,126,458 yards of cotton cloth representing a sum of 18 million pounds st.

An idea of the economic and industrial position of India may be obtained from the following data. In 1917 the railways extended over 40,000 miles and were owned chiefly by British capitalists. The figure does not include the narrow gauge and branch-lines the majority of which were owned by native capital. The number of workers employed on the railways, including those who worked in the railway workshops, was 1½ million and for other industrial enterprises there were in all 9,000 with two million workers. Of these enterprises 5,000 were worked by steam and electricity; Besides, India had 1800 tea and coffee plantations with 900,000 workers. The production of coal, naphta, manganese, mica, iron and gold was carried on with great energy. The activity of the ports and docks may be judged of by the fact that no less than a million workers were employed therein.

Considerable progress was also made by the jute industry. The native capital invested in this branch grew 113% since 1914. The woollen and paper-making also developed greatly.

India's coal output in 1917 was 18,200,000 tons and the coal consumption - 17,809,000 tons. As compared to 1913 the production had increased by two million tons. The Indian industry consumed 9,000,000 tons. For the sake of comparison we recall that, the Japanese industry - not counting the merchant

marine - consumed 10,326,000 tons of coal in 1917. The naphta output in India also increased considerably.

Simultaneously with the growth of industry, Indian trade developed greatly. Indian merchants are lately beginning to take an ever greater part in foreign trade. They are competing in Dutch India, on the Malay Peninsula, in East Africa, Afghanistan and partly in China, supplying these markets with cotton goods and semi-manufactures. The export of manufactured goods from India is growing, whereas the export of raw materials, in particular of raw cotton, is decreasing.

The following table showing (in percentage) the decrease of Indian capital as invested in Government bonds and securities and the growth of capital in industrial enterprises, testify that the Indian bourgeoisie did not fail to take advantage of the favourable conditions created by the war and the change, in the economic policy of the British Government:

	1914	**1917**	**1918**	**1919**	**1920**
Gov. bonds and securities	100	70	67	74	62
Banking	100	106	112	116	137
Municipal loans	100	89	84	84	81
Jute industry	100	311	467	383	563
Cotton industry	100	132	162	167	386
Woollen industry	100	106	125	125	187
Coal mining	100	136	134	157	149
Tea plantations	100	137	125	123	136
Flour-milling	100	137	206	238	406
Iron and steel	100	332	295	284	207

The change in the economic policy of the British Government also found expression in the setting up in 1916 of the India Industry Commission with a view to finding ways and means for the industrial development of the country. The Commission consisted of 10 members, four of whom were Indians; one of them was the leader of the right wing of the Indian National

Congress and the other three belonged to the biggest manufacturers of the country. The Commission was instructed to investigate and report on the possibilities of a further industrial development of India and to give its views on the following questions. A. Can new sources be found for the profitable application of Indian capital in Indian trade and industry? B. Can the Government - and if the answer is in the affirmative, in what way - contribute to the industrial development of the country by means of:

1. technical advice;
2. the organisation model enterprises showing the practicability of certain industries on commercial lines;
3. direct or indirect financial support to the industrial enterprises;
4. any other ways not conflicting with the Government's fiscal policy in India.

The Commission finished its labours and in 1918 presented a printed report. In general outline its contents are the following:

1. In future the Government must take an active part in the industrial development of the country.
2. India produces all the raw materials she requires, but she is unable to produce many articles that she needs in peace and war times. It is therefore imperative that the Government help to set up such industries in India in default of which the country would be exposed to a great danger in case of war,
3. The most modern methods must be introduced in the agricultural technique, in order that the labour now wasted may be profitably employed in the manufacturing industries.
4. General education must be aimed at, but it were unjust to place the whole expenditure for its realisation on industry, it being clearly the duty of the Government to carry through this measure.

5. Special technical education must be provided for on a large scale.
6. The Government must give up its policy of non-interference with the country's economical life, which it had pursued until now. Industrial banks must be established; if necessary - with the Government's financial support.
7. Since it is, on the one hand, doubtless necessary to strengthen the economic position of the country, while, on the other hand, it is obvious that the population itself, without the Government's aid is unable to achieve this, the Government must adopt the principle of energetic interference in the industrial affairs of the country.

The British Government's readiness to come to terms with the Indian bourgeoisie also found political expression in the Montagu-Chelmsford Bill. Profiting by the highly favourable conditions brought about by the war, the Indian capitalist class obtained so firm an economic footing that the British Government could no longer ignore it.

If, after the war, the Government had resurrected its old, policy of checking the economic development of the country; this would have induced the Indian bourgeoisie, grown strong during the war both politically and organisationally, to take its stand at the head of the revolutionary movement which had widely spread all over the country. The only way to prevent this catastrophe was to direct the political aspirations of the bourgeoisie into another channel. The war was over. The Indian bourgeoisie had all along been loyal to the Government and was now waiting for the realisation of the twice repeated promise of home rule. The Government therefore hastened to introduce the reforms provided by the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, which may be summed up as follows:

(1) Changes were made in the control of the British Parliament over the Government of India, as exercised by the State Secretary for India.

(2) The number of Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Committee was increased.

(3) Two legislative chambers were established, and the number of Indian members as well as the ratio of elected members to those appointed has been increased.

(4) The franchise has been extended so as to include all the propertied classes as falling under a certain property qualification.

(5) The actual political power which formerly had been wielded by the Executive Committee went over partly to the legislative chambers.

(6) To assist the provincial rulers, Indians were appointed, who were to be recruited from among the representatives of moderate nationalism.

(7) The number of members of the provincial legislative chamber was increased and their legislating powers extended

(8) A third part of all the higher civil service posts was reserved for the native population.

(9) Facilities were granted for the admission of natives to civil service examinations in India as well as in England.

(10) The difference between the salaries of the English and the Indian officials was reduced.

(11) The municipal government has been to a large extent placed into the hands of the local bourgeoisie.

By the way, the most essential part of this reform which - as many people believe - has opened up a new political era in India, are the economic concessions made to Indian capital. The nature of these concessions may be seen from the Reform Act, which states that, in view of the desirability of the industrial development of India, the Government fully shares the wish of the representatives of Indian industry to avail themselves of the economic advantages which can arise from the manufacture of local raw material at home. The British theories of the non-

interference of the State with the sphere of economics, cannot be applied to India. If the resources of the country are to be developed, the Government must contribute to it.

It is not to be wondered at that the leading Parties are still embittered against the Government. The people realises its inability to achieve the programme of industrial development with its own forces, without aid or guidance from the Government. Thus a new situation arose. The prohibition of import from enemy countries was welcomed in India, as it gave the possibility to replace foreign goods by native manufactured articles. After the war the necessity of industrial development must be felt still more keenly, if India does not want to become a dumping place for foreign goods and wishes to prevent a violent competition on her territory among foreign countries for a market upon which depends their political might. India is, of course, entitled to claim the assistance of the Government in helping her to become an industrial country.

A progressive economic policy is necessary in all respects - not only in order to give India economic stability, but also to satisfy the aspirations of her population to make India an industrial country; and to provide a wider sphere of activity for her youth which now has no openings except Government service and some overcrowded professions; and, lastly in order that the money now lying waste might be used for the welfare of the country. The interests of the Empire also demand that India's resources should receive full development. Thanks to the industrial development of India, the might of the Empire will increase enormously. The representatives of separate branches of industry are inclined to believe that each new mill or factory curtails the source of their profit; yet all additional wealth raises the buying capacity of the whole country.

The war has shown clearly how important the economic development of the State is in military respects. In our days the production of war materials depends to such an extent upon the state of industry, that the development of India's natural resources

becomes a military necessity. The representatives of the Indian political Parties probably also wish that India should be able to satisfy her military requirements The Government realises its responsibility in the question of India's industrial development. It is confident that the necessary capital will be found as soon as favourable conditions will be established. Therefore banking and credit facilities must be provided. The general wish that Indian capital and Indian labour should find application for the welfare of the country as a whole is the best augury.

Such were the reasons that induced the British capitalist class not only to recognise the Indian bourgeoisie as a very important factor, but also to help its development by drawing it to the exploitation of the country. With its change of policy the British Government intended to split off the Indian bourgeoisie from the national movement by showing them that a wide sphere of activity can be guaranteed to them under British rule. On the other hand, the Indian bourgeoisie were interested most of all in strengthening their own economic position and considered the political struggle merely as a means thereto. The acquisitions of the bourgeoisie in the economical sphere during the war were substantiated by the new policy of the Government, a new era of prosperity thus setting in for Indian industry since 1918.

Furthermore, the development of industry was promoted by the influx of free capital brought about by the closing of German and Austrian firms which - by means of Indian middle-men - had been carrying on an extensive export and import trade in raw materials and manufactured goods. In 1918-19, their capital invested in commercial enterprises fell to one eighth of the pre-war sums.

As native industry developed important changes came about in the foreign trade. The imports of machinery grew, while those of cotton goods decreased.

The export of raw materials diminished considerably. According to official data, India's foreign trade has increased

sixfold since 1900, machinery and naptha taking the first place in imports. The returns of India's foreign trade show that the country's industry must be developed in order to raise her purchasing capacity. Manufactured and semi-manufactured goods are of greater value than raw materials. This tendency has been noted these last years. Jute is exported in manufactured articles. Oil seeds are worked in the country itself and oil exported. Thanks to this India is able to import more machines and other articles required for her industrial development.

The wealth of the Indian bourgeoisie during and after the war did not increase at the expense of British capital. As we shall show in another article, along with the enrichment of the Indian bourgeoisie, the broad masses of the population became impoverished.

To-day the Indian bourgeoisie represents doubtless an important factor. Realising this and in view of the growing revolutionary movement in India, the Government, wishing as it does to win over to its side that part of the population which, owing to its class interests, is the nearest to it, is now ready to admit the Indian bourgeoisie to the government and exploitation of the country. However, the Indian capitalist class - in whose hands are already concentrated three quarters of all the industrial concerns and a considerable part of the trade - is far from being content. The greater the concessions made by the Government to the Indian bourgeoisie, the more their demands grow.

The Indian bourgeoisie realise perfectly well that they cannot do without a compromise with British capital, but they are biding their time to begin the struggle for the monopoly of exploiting India. They also realise that they need the help of the masses to overthrow British imperialism. In order to bribe the workers, whose revolutionary consciousness is growing day by day in view of the impoverishment of the masses and the concentration of the country's wealth in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the latter freely admit the masses to the Indian National Congress. But at the same time the Indian bourgeoisie,

by declaring for a second time a boycott of British goods, have made it evident that they wish to enrich themselves at the expense of the people.

The Indian bourgeoisie as well as the Indian masses are egged on to revolution by a number of objective factors. But these two parts of the population are divided by the difference of their class interests, and the abyss between them is broadening and will broaden still more as Indian industry will develop, both these factors are becoming stronger and consolidated each for itself, The masses - thanks to the growth of the Labour Union and peasant movement, the bourgeoisie - by means of their political mouth-piece: the National Congress.

The fact that the Indian National Congress under Gandhi's leadership has been able in three months to collect 10 million rupees for the National Fund testifies the growing solidarity of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The All-India Moslem League founded in 1912 with the aid of the Government, which expected to create out of the Moslem capitalists and landed aristocracy a political opposition to the Indian National Congress (consisting almost exclusively of Indian elements with a very small admixture of Moslem intellectuals), has given up its original role and joined the nationalist movement of the Indian bourgeoisie, At present the Indian bourgeoisie represents a social class closely knitted together economically and politically, and conscious of its historical mission. It will doubtless be in the vanguard of the national movement which will overthrow the foreign rule. However, the more it will be conscious of itself as of a class, the more difficult will it be for it to deceive the masses.

The more important the economic development of the country, the more acute will the class differences become. There can be no doubt that the overthrow of British rule in India will be achieved by the combined efforts of the bourgeoisie and the masses, but we cannot say as yet what form their union will take.

It will be easier for us to approach this question after examining the present position of the masses and measuring the gulf that separates these two revolutionary factors.

THE LIBERALISM OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

The ridiculousness of Wilsonian Liberalism fades away into insignificance when compared with the sanctimonious zeal of the international Social Democrats and Labourites for the doctrine of "self-determination."

When the Liberals, who do not conceal their pious anxiety to save bourgeois society, talk about such things as the "self-determination of peoples," etc., they at least deserve credit for loyalty to their class; but to the Social Democrats and Labourites, it is nothing but a doctrine; a doctrine to be utilised, not in order to serve the interests of the workers they profess to represent, but to mislead them, blindfold them, betray them.

Were it not so, how can we explain the shameful way in which the attempt to build a united front of the world proletariat to resist the determined assault of the bourgeoisie has been and is being sabotaged by the redoubtable Social Democrats of Europe and tile liberal Labourites of England.

Second International-First Humbug

What possibly could be the motive of Vandervelde or Ramsay MacDonald in adopting the obstructionist policy which almost wrecked the Berlin Conference?

Can anybody help seeing through the crocodile tears shed by these two honourable gentlemen over imprisoned Social Revolutionary terrorists and the well-deserved fate of the Georgian Mensheviks, on recollecting how silently the one connived at the butchery in the Congo and how conveniently the rather forgets about the Irish political prisoners rotting until recently in subterranean dungeons-or the wholesale massacres in India, Egypt and the Rand?

Before taking the Soviet Government to task for the alleged violation of the sovereignty of the Georgians, the Second International would do well to look after the morals of its own members. What about the colonial policy of the British Labour Party, one of the mainstays of the Second International?

The leaders of the British Labour Party never committed the crime of calling themselves Socialists (the Socialism of the I.L.P. brand can be calmly discounted), but the Second International has in its folds it number of the celebrities of renegade Marxism, and as an organisation it still pretends to lead the working class in the struggle for social regeneration (the word revolution is taboo).

Cannot the Second International see that if the victory of the European proletariat depends in any way upon the self determination of the peoples subjugated by the various imperialist powers, then it should leave Georgia alone, and turn its attention to such nations as the Irish, Egyptians, and Indians, who are coerced into slavery with the connivance, if not support, of the British Labour Party! We know that the Georgian bogey has no earthly connection whatsoever with the much heeded unity of the European proletariat. It is conjured up purely to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

India? Egypt? Ireland?

But let as take for granted the sincerity of the democratic liberalism of the British Labour Party. Let us believe for the moment that Ramsay MacDonald together with his kin on the Continent, believes in the doctrine of self-determination. Let us also acknowledge that the Georgian Mensheviks are not tools of the Entente, but "legitimate representatives" of the Georgian people. Now, if the British Labour Party is so passionately in love with the abstract principle of self-determination" that it will not work for the consolidation of a united proletarian front against a concentrated capitalist offensive, until and unless the Communist International induces the Soviet government to stop

the "Bolshevik aggression" in Georgia-may we not remind them that the Egyptians and the Indians stand in need of self-determination no less than the Georgians?

Would not the juridicial knowledge of the leaders of the Second International be equally, if not more usefully employed, were it devoted to the defence of the harmless pacifist Gandhi, locked up for six years, to securing an equitable trial for those terrorists who have systematically tried to kill the leaders of the Russian Revolution? If a Tseretelli's right to deliver the Georgian workers and peasants over to the exploitation of the English capitalists is to be respected as sacred, why does the British Labour Party look askance at the movements led by a De Valera, or a Zaglul Pasha or a Gandhi? Is it because Tseretelli's "most democratic republic" accepted the dictatorship of British capital, whereas the right of self-determination accorded to the movements headed by the latter three would mean the disruption of the British Empire?

We are expected to believe that the Social Democrats and the Labourites stand for freedom for all, as against the principle of proletarian dictatorship professed by the Communists. Well, the sincerity of the British Labour Party in this question cannot stand the test when its attitude towards the national movements in the colonies is examined. Let us look into its record. Never has the British Labour Party defined its attitude, on the Colonial Question.

Of all its leaders, Ramsay MacDonald has written the most about the imperial administration of the subject countries. We search in vain all through his writings to find a sentence which unconditionally recognises the right of the colonial peoples to determine freely what sort of government they would like to have. The most liberal statement he makes amounts to this: the old jingoist imperialism is untenable under the present circumstances; more liberal methods have to be adopted if the safety and permanence of the Empire is to be insured; the word Empire has become too odious, a more democratic term-

Comtuonwealth-has to be introduced. He is sure that the "democratic Federation of the British Empire" will be safe and secure in the keeping of the Labour politicians; a Col. Wedgewood in the India Office and a Ramsay MacDonald in Delhi will be a great improvement upon the noble lords now occupying those comfortable positions. The Irish policy of the Labour Party has never committed the sin of exceeding the limits of Gladstonian liberalism. So much by way of generalisation; now a few particulars.

When at the beginning of the war the Boer Nationalists of South Africa rose in revolt with the object of declaring an independent republic, the liberalism of the British labour leaders fell into line with those rank imperialists who found German intrigue, behind that revolt and dammed it as treason. Not a murmur was to be heard from the British Labour Party when De Wet was sentenced to hard labour.

Such an event as the 1916 Easter Revolution in Ireland could not make the British Labour Party define its attitude regarding this thorny question. As a member of the War Cabinet, Henderson did not raise a finger to save James Connolly, not to speak of others whose genuine fervour for national independence cannot be blackened by the insinuation of underground German intrigues. The British Labour Party did not find it necessary out of loyalty to the working class at least to withdraw from the Coalition which has killed the champion of the Irish proletariat.

In the present Irish embroglio, the British Labour Party has succeeded only in making itself ridiculous. Lloyd Georgian (not even Gladstonian) liberalism has stolen its thunder. The perfunctory Irish Settlement, which resulted in the betrayal of the Irish people by Collins and Griffith, has satisfied all the demands the British Labour Party ever put forth on this question. Consequently, there is no other way left to it but to look on stupidly and impotently at the hopeless mix-up in Ireland.

The British Labour Party has maintained a sublime indifference towards the brutal repression is India ever since the

earliest years of the present century. When the so-called "war services " of the Indian people-services for which even the pacifist Ramsay MacDonald congratulates the Indians and recommends a better lot for them-were paid for by the infamous Rowlatt Act, which practically put the entire country under martial law, not even a word of protest was raised by the British Labour Party. But the Amritsar massacre which followed upon the heels of the Rowlatt Act, disturbed the philosophic calm of the British Labourites and elicited a conventional protest from them. This document, signed among others by Henderson, J.H. Thomas, Robert Williams and Lansbury, deplored the foolishness of such a policy of repression, and pointed out that thereby "the lives of the thousands of English women and children in India were endangered." The apostles of humanity, who are so indignant over the imaginary terrorism in Georgia, were only concerned about the precious lives of helpless members of the ruling class, when the unarmed workers of India were being bombed and blown up by hundreds.

Terror in India

When Col. Wedgewood and Ben Spoor attended the Indian National and Trade Union Congresses as fraternal delegates in the stormy days of 1920, all they did was to prevent any dangerous turn in the Non-Co-operation movement by stalwartly pointing out the possibilities of the Montague Reforms, as well as the Divine Providence behind the Anglo-Indian bond which, they exhorted, should be preserved for the welfare of civilisation. On his return to England, Wedgewood warned the British ruling class of the seriousness of the Indian situation and advised them to be careful in handling it.

The reign of terror initiated in India by Lord Reading last winter has been overlooked by the British Labour Party. The situation became such that even the capitalist press was full of news about the daily arrest and imprisonment of hundreds of nationalist leaders and volunteers on mere technical charges. The debate in the House of Commons upon the Indian situation

placed the British Labour Party in a very delicate dilemma. In order to evade the frankly imperialistic rôle of supporting the Government's Indian policy as against the bloodthirsty resolution of the "Die-hards," Col. Wedgewood led his flock dramatically out of the House. But no one can be fooled any longer by such naive political manœuvres.

The resolution subsequently adopted by the joint session of the Labour Party Executive, the Trade Union Congress and the Parliamentary Labour Party concerning the reign of terror in India was a shameful instance of pseudo-liberalism. It suggested that the Indian National Congress should stop all Non-Co-operation activities before meeting with the Government for the purpose of negotiations. Such instances, which are but veiled imperialism, can be added to indefinitely. But these are enough to expose the hypocrisy of the doctrine of self-determination, so dear to the British Labourites.

A few words more about Egypt. The Labour Party did not have anything to say against the proclamation of the British Protectorate over Egypt at the beginning of the war. The repeated persecution and the ultimate deportation of Zaglul failed to inspire these champions of liberty with holy indignation. They tacitly support the present policy of coercing the Egyptian people with the help of a few landed aristocrats, bought with sham concessions.

Wake 'em Up

Such, in short, is the glorious record of those who are sabotaging the proletarian struggle. As at the just concluded meeting of the Commission of Nine, the representatives of the Second International attempted to sidetrack the issue of proletarian unity by raising the Georgian question and that of the imprisoned Social Revolutionaries, our representatives asked them to put their own house in order first. They called upon the British Labour Party to demand the recognition of the Irish Republic and the freedom of Egypt and India, under the threat

of direct action by the British working class. At least let the British Labour Party openly advocate the right of self-determination for the peoples subjugated by British Imperialism as ardently as they hold the brief for the Georgian Mensheviks. We know what the Second International and the British Labour Party will answer. They are defending the interests of the bourgeoisies of their respective countries. This will be another way of tearing the mask from their face so that the workers, who are still following them, will see them in their true light.

THE EMPIRE AND THE REVOLUTION

The fact that in spite of its general bankruptcy Capitalism is still holding its own in the Western countries proves that as a world-dominating force it has not reached such a state of decay that its immediate collapse is inevitable. Since the period when Capitalism entered upon its last and most highly developed stage-imperialism-its stronghold was no longer confined to the industrially advanced countries of Western Europe. In imperial expansion was found a way out of the ruinous effects of over-production. Of course, it was a temporary solution bound to prove equally ineffective to save the capitalist mode of production from eventual collapse under its own contradictions. But the fact is that, until to-day, imperial expansion and exploitation do render strength to Capitalism to maintain its position in Europe.

The great imperialist war shook the very foundation of the capitalist order in European countries; had the leading members of the victorious combination not had the access to other sources of recuperation, the European bourgeoisie would have had much less success in defending the citadel of the capitalist State than is actually the case.

This source of strength lies in the imperialist character of the present-day Capitalism, which holds in its hands the entire control-economic, political, and military-of the whole world, and thus finds itself in a position to put up a stiff and continued resistance against the proletariat in the home countries.

The existence and power of the Western bourgeoisie do not any longer depend wholly and exclusively on its ability to wring the greatest amount of surplus value from the labour-power of the workers in the home countries. The imperial right of exploiting the vast non-European toiling masses and markets has supplied and still supplies it with an additional modus vivendi and a weapon to defend its position at home, in spite of the apparent precariousness and impossibility of maintaining its power there for any length of time.

As the result of the war the world finds itself divided into two great colonial empires belonging to two powerful capitalist States. The United States of America endeavours to assume the supreme and exclusive right of exploiting and ruling the entire New World; while Great Britain has annexed to her empire the greater part of the continents of Asia and Africa. A third imperialist factor, Japan, also aspires to become formidable; but in spite of her considerable local importance in Eastern Asia she has still to play second fiddle to one or the other of these two great rivals.

Then Continental Europe, owing to its utter economic ruin, financial bankruptcy, and industrial dislocation, is bound to become a politico-financial dependency of either of these two great imperialist powers, which are preparing for another giant struggle for world domination. The power of the American bourgeoisie has not been very seriously affected, except in that it has to withstand the repercussion of the severe blows received by Capitalism as a social institution. On the contrary, the control of world finance, the monopoly of the British capitalist for a century and a-half, is transferred to a great extent into the hands of the American capitalist class, which cannot be said to have reached the period of decay and degeneration as yet. In order to consolidate its newly acquired world-power, the American bourgeoisie inclines towards keeping temporarily away from the infectious ruin of Europe. Thus the British bourgeoisie becomes the supreme ruler of the Old World and the backbone

of the capitalist order in Europe. Now, where does the source of strength of the British bourgeoisie lie? Judging from the industrial conditions obtaining in the British Isles during the last years, it will appear that had its resources been limited exclusively to the productivity of those islands and the consumptive power of continental Europe, the capitalist order in Britain would certainly stand on the very brink of collapse. But despite all the chronic contradictions of the order, the contradictions that put almost insuperable difficulties against, reconstructing the industrial fabric of the home country on the pre-war basis, the capitalist class of Britain does not appear to be losing its grip on the State-power. It is still very firm in the political saddle, because the economic ground within its wide range of operation has not become unreliable.

It still succeeds in deceiving one section and coercing another of the proletariat. By foregoing a part of the rich fruits of colonial exploitation, the British bourgeoisie is able to corrupt the upper strata of the proletariat-to create a Labour aristocracy which not only becomes a willing protagonist of imperialism, but constitutes a bulwark of reaction in the home country. Nor is this reactionary rôle of the bought-up Labour aristocracy confined within national boundaries: the British Labour Party is the main pillar of the Second International as well as of the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions. The possession of a vast non-European colonial empire with unlimited resources of raw material, labour-power, and markets, on the one hand, makes British Capitalism considerably independent of continental Europe, but on the other provides it with the means to turn the latter practically into its economic dependency.

British capital to-day has a very wide scope of action. The economic and industrial development of the rich and thickly populated countries of Asia would supply it with new vigour. There are great possibilities in these countries, particularly India and China, which will provide cheap labour-power and new markets not to be exhausted very soon. Let those who fondly

think that the bankruptcy of Germany will destroy more than a third of Britain's industries remember the saying, "If the Chinaman's shirt-tail is lengthened by six inches the textile production of the world will have to be doubled." The consumptive power of the teeming millions of India is also immense.

The post-war readjustment of the economic relations between the various parts of the Empire show that the British bourgeoisie-at least the forward-looking section of it-has not been slow in finding the necessity of falling back on its reserve forces. By means of the projected system of imperial preference, the British Empire is to become a self-contained economic unit, whose existence will not be seriously threatened by the economic and industrial conditions in other countries. On the contrary, this self-contained economic unit will establish domination over the rest of the world, which must become more or less dependent on it. Thus the success of the scheme of imperial federation will not only stabilise the position of the British bourgeoisie, but will react upon the international situation. Entire Europe may become an economic dependency of this federation, but Capitalism as a social institution will have its lease of life renewed. This being the case, it is of great importance that the development of the forces contributing to this scheme of capitalist reconstruction be studied with an application not less than is devoted to the problems concerning Europe.

Never has it been more necessary to remember the truism that the world transcends the boundaries of Europe and America. After turning the centre of modern civilisation into a heap of ruins Capitalism is seeking new fields of activity. If it succeeds in this attempt the European proletariat may sink into abject degeneration instead of revolution. The bourgeoisie is trying to beat a clever retreat, which should be cut off if the world revolution is to develop. In view of the fact that the power of international capital is rooted all over the globe, anything less than a world-wide revolution will not bring about the end of

the present order and the triumph of the Western proletariat. The struggle of the latter, in order to be successful, must be co-ordinated with the revolutionary action of the toiling masses of the lands subjugated by capitalist imperialism.

In its efforts to extricate itself from the vicious circle Capitalism entered the stage of imperial expansion and exploitation, thus bringing huge armies of colonial workers under its domination. By turning the peasants and artisans of the subject countries into mostly agricultural and partly industrial proletariat, Imperialism reinforced its position, but at the same time brought into existence another force destined to contribute largely to its ultimate destruction. This being the case, the overthrow of the bourgeois order in Europe, which order to-day is supported by colonial exploitation whose possibilities are not yet exhausted, will not be realised, as is commonly believed, alone by the advanced proletariat of Europe.

It is necessary to secure the conscious co-operation of the working masses and other available revolutionary elements in those colonial and "protected countries" which afford the greatest economic and military support to Western Imperialism, and which are the most developed, economically, industrially, and politically.

India occupies the foremost place in this category of colonial countries. She has not only been a powerful pivot on which British Imperialism rested, but the scheme of developing her resources intensively and extensively with the co-operation of the national bourgeoisie will, if realised, help British capital to stabilise itself for the time being. And this possible stabilisation of the British capitalist class will react upon the continental countries in a way which is not very encouraging. Therefore, a clear understanding of the socio-economic conditions as well as the political movement in contemporary India becomes necessary for the leaders of the Western proletariat.

The point of view that the peoples of the East, because they are not in general on the same economic and political level with

Western countries, can be reckoned as one and the same social unit with identical problems to solve, is erroneous. The Eastern countries vary greatly in their political, economic, industrial, and social conditions, consequently their problem is not the same, and the movement in those countries will not develop along a uniform line. Whereas in the Mussulman countries of the Near East the religious fanaticism of the ignorant masses and the anti-foreign sentiments of the land-owning gentry can be counted upon, though only to a certain extent, as a force which can be directed against imperialist domination, these elements no longer possess the same political significance in India, where a radical economic and industrial transformation has taken place during the last quarter of a century. In the Near Eastern countries the exploitation of imperial capital has not penetrated deep enough to bring about a fundamental change in the social organism.

The economic structure of these countries is still predominantly feudal, and the influence of the clergy is strong. But the same thing cannot be said about India, which since a considerable time ago has been brought fully under the extensive, if not intensive, exploitation of capital mainly imperial and partly native (the latter has been growing very fast in the last years). Feudalism has been destroyed, not by means of a violent revolution, but by its long contact with the modern political and economic institutions that are the reflex of the most highly developed capitalist State. There has come into existence in India a national bourgeoisie, which more than thirty years ago began its historical struggle for the conquest of political power from the foreign ruler; and a proletarian class, including a huge landless peasantry, which grows in number and class-consciousness in proportion to the rapid industrialisation of the country.

Consequently, the revolutionary movement in India to-day does not rest upon the religious fanaticism of the ignorant masses, which fanaticism is fast losing its potentiality owing to the economic transformation of the society, nor does it rest upon the

abstract conception of nationhood, an idea reared upon the imaginary unity of interest of the entire people, and not taking into consideration the class division which is becoming more and more clearly defined as a result of the development of native capitalism. Indian capitalism promises to be an ally of imperial domination rather than a revolutionary force. The liberal bourgeoisie, which stands at the head of the National Democratic Movement, cannot be expected to play the same revolutionary rôle as was done by the European middle class in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The bourgeoisie in India becomes a revolutionary factor only if its economic development is altogether impossible under imperial rule. But post-war imperialism depends more upon finance than upon industrial capital. Since, for the interests of imperial capital, the colonial country has to be industrialised, the native bourgeoisie cannot be any longer excluded altogether from this feast of exploitation. This peculiar economic situation deprives the Indian bourgeoisie of the possibility of playing a revolutionary rôle. The conditions for a pure bourgeois revolution do not exist in India. The national struggle is not a class struggle. The national bourgeoisie is not pitted against an old order of social production.

The weak native bourgeoisie finds it more profitable to ally itself with the imperialist power in return for such changes in the political and economic administration of the country as will permit it greater opportunities for developing as a class. Imperial capital, for the reasons stated above, is not averse from giving the colonial bourgeoisie such opportunities. In fact, the new policy is already introduced in India, and it has had its effects on the political movement for national liberation. The class-cleavage in the Indian society has become evident.

The object of this new colonial policy is, first, to check the movement for national liberation, and second, to draw upon the reserve forces in order that capitalism can hold its own in the home countries. The enormous extent of these reserve forces is

visualised by few in the revolutionary camp, although our enemy seems to be fully cognisant of it. It is hardly understood that if Imperialism succeeds in carrying through the new policy the Central European proletarian may be reduced to the state of a colonial coolie. While Capitalism is spreading out to the far-off corners of the earth to save itself from the ruinous effects of the imperialist war, it is a monumental mistake for the revolutionary proletariat to stake its future on its success in Middle Europe. This blunder arises out of a provincialism, from which deplorable trait the leaders of the international proletariat must free themselves ere long.

ON INTELLECTUALS

My dear …

It is needless to say how glad I was to receive your letter. That you found my letters at least "interesting" is encouraging. It is but natural that the years which have passed since we were together, would create some difference in our outlook on life. Therefore, the first thing necessary is for us to compare notes.

I must tell you at the very beginning that my letters and writings may have been read by you "with as much interest as possible", but they have not been properly understood. It would be presumptuous to claim that my knowledge of India is perfect, but let me tell you that I have learned much more about our country, people and society in the last several years of my wanderings, than I ever did in those early days of romantic patriotism. It is indeed difficult to form a correct estimate of the present situation without intimate knowledge of the details, but it is also true that too much local colour often limits our vision and understanding. It is evident that you read my writings with a preconceived notion about my present convictions; otherwise, how was it possible for you to come to the conclusion that I "want to finish in one step" what you want to do in two? Then, what I stand for is not, as you sarcastically call it, "the beautiful argument: Down with the bourgeoisie!" Exactly on the contrary!

The political philosophy advocated by us for the truly revolutionary element of our country today, teaches us to demand a bourgeois democratic republic. But this blessed bourgeoisie of yours, on whom you appear to believe the salvation of our country depends, is too afraid, too hesitating, to follow a revolutionary channel. Therefore, it is necessary to invoke, - to call into action, - other forces which will push these middle-class heroes onward in the fight, and make it impossible for them to shirk revolutionary responsibilities, as they did at Bardoli and innumerable times before and after. I fail to understand why you should consider this tactics as directed towards manufacturing a Communist Paradise overnight, in that medieval land of ours.

Let me tell you that you cannot put more stress than I do on the first necessity of our country's political independence. I suppose this is news to you, because somehow or other, you have got the notion that I have extricated myself from one romanticism only to plunge headlong into another. Only a hopeless romanticist could preach a Communist Revolution for a country in which 80 per cent of the population is engaged in primitive agriculture. No my friend, you may think that 1 cannot appreciate your difficulties in patching up the differences between the Hindus and Mussulmans, - (of the "thinking portion of our people"), - but do not imagine that I have followed blindly in the foot-prints of our venerable Indian revolutionaries outside India, who maintain a sublime ignorance of the fundamental principles of revolution while living in the midst of a world thrown into a revolutionary maelstrom.

It seems that you have a special dislike to my habit of sending literature, nor do you approve of my "flooding the country with a new ideal". Well, I suppose you have your reasons for this. We are agreed that the salvation of our country will be achieved by the people of the country, but don't you think that in this mission, we may stand in need of some intellectual stimulus from outside? I may not know what particular groups of the "thinking portion

of our people" are up to, but occasionally I have a chance of glimpsing the average intellectual level and psychological intricacies of this class. There are a lot of students coming from all parts of India to study in the various European countries. Many of them have taken an active part in the Non-cooperation Movement, and have distinguished themselves for patriotism, devotion and self-sacrifice; but I do not hesitate to say that if I had to depend on these youthful representatives of your "thinking portion" of our population for any reliable information about present conditions in India, my ignorance of the matter would be even greater than you deem it to be. I have never seen such intellectual bankruptcy and political confusion as is manifested by them. Some time ago I attended a meeting of the students' club here. A newly-arrived young man, said to have been very actively connected with the Non-cooperation Movement, was asked to speak on "The Present Situation in India". It was quite natural for me to expect to learn something from him about those "perspectives" which you say I stand in need of. Well, after listening to a long rambling discourse of an hour or more, from which one could not pick out even such generalities as are easily available from newspapers, my unconscious impression was expressed by another student from England, who demanded when the speaker sat down: "What is the situation in India" The debate that followed was even worse for its shallowness, if anything could be worse than the principal speech.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, there happened to be present in the meeting one of the much-maligned Moderates, Sir…, who spoke something which was worth while listening to, even if one could not in the least agree with him. There was a man with a clear idea of what he wanted. But this much cannot be said of most of our middle-class semi-intellectuals making such a mess of our movement, and who according to you, are God's Chosen People in our otherwise accursed land. And I must tell you that it was not only the youthful students against whose mediocrity and muddle-headedness the clear-sightedness of the representative of our upper bourgeoisie shone so brightly; the

ranks of the students were reinforced by several nationalist celebrities and intellectual beacon-lights who have been trying to create public opinion abroad in favour of India for the past decade or so.

The moral of this tale is that one should not be so touchy on the subject of learning from others. How can I maintain organic connection with home unless those at home are given to understand my point of view on the outstanding questions of the day? And these heaps of unwelcome literature are the only means by which a really organic connection can be maintained. But if you think that the simple fact of my being abroad deprives me of the status of working for and being of the people, by whom you say, propaganda should be made, then I must tell you that you are mistaken. Do you think it reasonable to try to deprive me of the right to bring within the reach of those working inside the country the education and experience that I have received outside? That wouldn't be fair, would it?

November 10, 1922.

ON ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

My dear …

First let me dispel some of your misconceptions about my political views and methods of procedure. The political freedom of the nation is our first objective; all our efforts should be concentrated on that. So much is clear, is it not? But to formulate a problem is far from solving it. We want national freedom. Good. But how are we going to get it? Is it necessary still to point out that neither the upper-class pragmatic politicians nor the middle-class sentimentalists are capable of winning single-handed, the battle of Swaraj? Both of these elements have demonstrated, not only their inability, but their unwillingness to go all the way towards the winning of that Freedom whose attainment is the first and indispensable step for the future progress of our people. In order to understand fully the reason

for this betrayal by those whose patriotism is estimated so highly by you, one must have access to those very ideas whose importation into India you are so much against. We need a thorough knowledge of the history of human development, of the laws of economic determinism and of the achievements in the realm of social science if we are to understand what is going on in India, if we are to have that perspective that you speak of. Only then may we know why the upper and middle-classes cannot be depended upon for the national liberation of the people. India is not the only country where the battle for national emancipation has been fought. There are many instances in history, and the upper and middle-classes have played the self-same rule as they are doing now in India. This leads us to the gradual awakening of the masses, a phenomenon rather casually mentioned by you.

If you are thinking seriously of developing the social consciousness of the masses, if you believe that the bourgeoisie cannot conic to power without the active participation of the illiterate and propertyless majority of our people, then you should not dismiss the discontent of the workers and peasants as "simply economic". No community is ever involved in any political movement unless urged on by economic motives. The patriotism of the "thinking portion" of our population originates in the clearly-defined consciousness which this class has of its own economic needs. If you want the masses to take an active part in the political movement, you will have to go down into the economics of their lives, find out their basic necessities, and arouse in them the consciousness of these necessities and how to go about winning them in the political struggle.

Why do the so-called "thinking" elements of our people take a more active part in the political movement than the "common" people? It is not because this class is specially created by God to monopolize the political destinies of the nation, but because as a class, it is more conscious of its own economic interests. And why? Not because of any natural superiority, but because they

have more access to education. Some want industrial development, which will increase the amount of their profits; others want the doors to the higher government positions thrown open to them; still others want such a system of education as will enable them to earn more wages, etc. etc. Politics is based upon economic interests and necessities. Consequently, the political movement in which we want the masses of our people to take active part, must take into consideration the economic desires and necessities of the latter. That is all I have to say. If a party will be organized in India upon this principle, with an economic programme translated into political activities, backed up by direct action of the masses, there will be no further need to bother you with unwelcome heaps of literature.

A few concrete points. You seem to be very much concerned with the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is the logical reaction of our old exclusively Hindu Nationalism, which was simply Pan-Hinduism when carried to its extreme conclusion, forming the antithesis of the aggressive Pan-Islamism. Now permit me to point out to you that, so long as you will endeavour to rear the structure of this much-needed Hindu-Muslim unity upon the thin surface of the "thinking portion" of our people exclusively, you may achieve mutual cordiality, but real unity will remain an unsolved problem. Here again, we must go down to the roots of things. It is upon the dynamics and not the statics of the question that we must base our calculations.

The preachings and exhortations of well-meaning patriots have their subjective significance, but the main problem can be solved only by the development of objective forces. The unity of the various communities inhabiting India should not be regarded as a mere political exigency. This unity will be achieved only by a social readjustment taking place as a result of the growth of new economic forces. The vertical divisions of our society can be eliminated only by the intensification of the horizontal division. That is to say, the divisions of caste, creed and religion will be replaced by class-cleavage, which divides

society as a whole into two great, hostile camps, - that of the propertied exploiter and that of the expropriated and exploited proletariat. Such being the case, Hindu-Muslim and every other communal unity can and will be realized only through the gradual process of development of class-demarcation. There is no other way. You may hate it; you may try by all means to prevent it; but it will be in vain, since the natural and inevitable development of social forces cannot be set at nought by our desires.

If you are courageous enough to get a firm grip on the economic foundations of our movement, the question of communal unity will not worry you so much; because then you will see how the pressure of economic forces is breaking down the ancient communal and religious prejudices and traditions. A landlord is first of all a landlord, and a Hindu or Mussulman or anything else after that. He does not take any less rent from a tenant who is his co-religionist than from one who is not. The same holds true of employers of labour. Have you ever seen a Muslim or Hindu or Parsi employer paying. a higher scale of wages to his brothers in the faith? These are general laws of economics that hold good everywhere. One can take them a priori for granted, because they have been proved and are proven true wherever tested. One dare not say that they are applicable to some countries and inapplicable to others.

We cannot seek to escape from the working of these economic laws by trying to believe that. India is a special creation of Providence. Our communal unity will be realized through the economic development of the country, just as communal unity has been realized everywhere else. Sentimental propaganda is useless. Your "thinking portion of the people" will on the contrary, try to preserve our communal animosities, since by this way they can keep their hold on the situation. No my dear friend, we must determine our method of work, not according to the convenience and capability of our handful of intellectual aristocrats, but according to the economic interests of the

overwhelming majority of our people. Just so long as we delude ourselves and others on the subject of superiority as measured by a university degree, just so long will we live in our heaven of intellectual isolation, happy perhaps, but condemned forever to our chains of slavery.

November 10, 1922.

ON RALLYING THE MASSES

My dear Comrade...

How presumptuous it is of those who have been directly or indirectly responsible for the exploitation of the masses, to think that they will be the judge of the latter's future activities. "The masses must be disciplined and trained before they are allowed to march forward". Who is going to do this, pray? The intellectual elite, I suppose, who are so anxious to have the "controlling power in their hand before the flaring up of the spark". In other words, you want to reserve the right to denounce the hungry, exploited workers as "Criminal hooligans", "rowdies" etc. whenever, impelled by revolutionary fury, they go farther than you want them to go. Y on want to determine w hat is good and what is had for the masses on the pretext of preserving the safety of the community by avoiding the class-struggle, which you call "internecine war". But class-struggle is not the curse of India alone; it is the essential character of civilized society, and all Indian nationalists, with the exception of the reactionary orthodox Non-Cooperators, want to introduce all the blessings of civilization in our society, excepting only this one. But in setting their feet on this path, they must accept the unavoidable consequences that must inevitably follow. Our labourers and peasants are not special beings; by "waking up the man in them", they will behave exactly like their class in every other land, under the stimulation of capitalist exploitation. What do you want to wake them up for? In order to travel further and faster on the road of progress. But how can they progress unless their grave social and economic disabilities are removed? And how is it possible to remove the economic disabilities without injuring the vested interests that profit thereby? In other words, if you sincerely desire the progress of the toiling masses, you cannot avoid a struggle with those who live by exploiting the labour of these toilers. This is the crux of the whole problem we have to solve. There is no way out of the triangular fight which is going on now, all the time. By shutting our eyes, we cannot make it non-existent.

You complain of the apathy of the masses, but how can you expect to dissipate this apathy unless you work on their primary instincts of food, shelter and clothing Big talk about a "National Independence", "Democracy", "Majority Rule", "Constitutional Government" etc. are beyond the understanding of the common people, who will however, respond to the call of those who lead them towards the redress of their economic grievances. If you refuse to do that on the plea of wishing to preserve unity of action, you will simply defeat your own ends by such tactics. How are you going to lead the "unwilling and unintelligent" mass to a "direct fight against their bondage", without doing the very thing that alone can do away with their deplorable unwillingness and unintelligence?

It is necessary to formulate the programme of our fight in such terms as will appeal to the ignorant and illiterate, but suffering and blindly rebellious workers and peasants of India. Before seeking to illuminate the man in the field and the factory on such intellectual abstractions as the spiritual character of Swaraj, you should try to make him understand the necessity of organizing for militant action against government and employers, to secure higher wages, shorter working-hours, lower rents, better living conditions, etc. You can lead them to struggle for the latter much more easily than for the former. The "Time Spirit", which you are anxious to utilize, can best be utilized in this connection.

Look around you and see what the masses of the Indian people want today, and let me tell you, they are not so unwilling

and apathetic as you seem to think. It is only among them that any fighting spirit is to be found. Who has occupied the center of our movement for the past three years? You may think it to be a handful of idealistic students, temporarily swayed by enthusiasm, but the fact is quite otherwise. The real battles for the liberation of our country are being fought in the villages, and in the workingmen's quarters of the great industrial centers. The peasantry of the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bengal and Madras, and the workers in all our great industries are the real power behind the movement. Those who, overestimating their own importance as intellectuals, overlook those revolutionary forces, miss the whole significance of what is taking place in India today. Our National Independence will be won by the efforts of the Indian workers and peasants. The days are gone when the middle-classes possessed any revolutionary significance. To rally the masses in battle-array is our fundamental task. I know better than anyone else, that this must be done by those inside the country. All we pretend to do is to be of some help to those who are bearing the actual brunt of the fight. As soon as we see such help is superfluous, all outside interference will cease.

November 10, 1922.

ON TRADE UNIONISM

Dear Comrade...

As you have noticed, "The Vanguard" is a purely Indian paper devoted to the cause of Indian independence; it is the organ of that section of the Indian Movement which believes that India should be free not for the aggrandisement of native capitalists, but for the benefit of the workers and peasants of India, and that she cannot be free without the conscious and concerted action of the toiling masses. We who are forced to live in exile, have been watching with great interest the steady development, of this tendency in the Indian movement, even within the ranks of the Indian National Congress, which is

predominantly a middle-class organization without much understanding of the socio-economic needs and conditions of the working-class. We strive to help the development of this tendency.

We know that the struggle of the working masses in India, as well as in all other lands, is essentially economic and social; the immediate concern of the exploited workers and pauperized peasantry is the amelioration of their unbearable economic condition, - their ultimate goal is social emancipation from all class rule. But neither of these two objects, - the immediate or the ultimate one - can be realized unless the entire Indian people can enjoy a free national existence which will enable them to enter into the healthy atmosphere of economic progress making inevitably for the social revolution. Therefore, the Indian working-class cannot be indifferent to the political struggle for national independence. It must participate actively in it as the first stage of the great social struggle in which it is involved, and which it must carry to a successful end in course of time.

On account of the abnormal condition in which India was forced to stagnate during the last hundred and fifty years, it has become impossible that our national freedom will be achieved mainly through the efforts and under the leadership of the middle-class. The interests of the bourgeoisie, including the landowning class, of contemporary India, although jeopardised, are not entirely antagonistic to those of the Imperial ruling class. The debacle of the Moderates and the imminent swing of the Congress towards the Right prove the correctness of this social theory. Imperialism of today is more under the control of Finance Capital than of the Manufacturing interests. The colonial working-masses have been practically proletarianized by the exploitation of Imperialist. Capital; therefore it is inevitable that they will be drawn more and more into the orbit of the world-wide revolt of the exploited classes.

Under these circumstances, the Imperialist ruling-class will find a docile hand-maid in the colonial bourgeoisie, if the

industrial and commercial aspirations of the latter are not completely suppressed. This possible alliance of the two otherwise antagonistic interests makes for the so-called "New Era" in the subject countries - a New Era begun in India for example with the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. This New Era, expressed in the terms of an Irish "Free State", or an "Independent" Egypt, or a "Dominionized" India, is calculated to break down the unity of the National Struggle of the subject peoples by buying up the loyalty and support of the propertied upper-classes. The Extremism of the lower middle-class, despite the complete pauperization of the latter, will never amount to anything unless it is reinforced by the dynamically revolutionary energy of the broad masses. Lower middle-class Extremism, cured of all metaphysical abstractions, must assume the leadership of the great mass-upheaval which is the backbone of the Indian Movement. The Indian National Congress, in order to survive the imminent betrayal of the present leaders, must lead the struggle ahead under the banner, not of petty-bourgeois reactionary Pacifism but of Revolutionary Nationalism.

So, the task before the Trade Union Congress is not Reform, but Revolution. It is not conservative unionism, based upon the bankrupt theory of "Collective Bargaining , but Revolutionary Mass Action involving the pauperized peasantry as well as the city and rural wage-earners, who must be organized and led by those who want to see Free India enter upon a period of social progress. Terrified by the spontaneous outburst of mass-energy, the middle-class extremists are ordering a retreat which has turned into a disorderly rout. It is necessary to reassure them; to show them the fountain-head of national energy; to tell them to make common cause with the working-masses, not to use them as pawns in the fight, but to recognize them as the heart and soul of it. Our cry is "Not the masses for Revolution, but Revolution for the masses".

Those who think that the economic and social condition of the Indian working-class can be appreciably improved before

India has realised political independence, are mistaken. To lead the working-class, which is in a state of dynamic revolt, towards Reformism, is to help perpetuate the exploitation of Imperialist Capital. The Trade Union Congress, in order to be able to execute the historic task it has undertaken, must free itself from the leadership which believes in piece-meal reform. Such leadership is, consciously or unconsciously, hostile to the interests of the working-class.

To bring about this inevitable union of the two radically revolutionary forces under the banner of National Independence and Social Progress is the task undertaken by us. We believe that you are fighting for the same object. Therefore, let us work together.

November 20, 1922.

ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE IN INDIA

Slowly, but surely British domination in India is being undermined. It is true that this historic process is not so speedy as many expected or even prophesied. Nevertheless, the process is going on unceasingly. The depression that followed the sudden collapse of the great Non-co-operation Movement lasted rather long, only to be enlivened, not by an intensified revolutionary activity, but by a concerted effort on the part of the bourgeoisie to challenge the absolute position of Imperialism, on constitutional lines. The development of this new stage has been the outstanding feature of the Indian nationalist struggle during the last twelve months. It has culminated in a political deadlock which has not only nonplussed the nationalist bourgeoisie, but has also placed the British Government in a somewhat uncomfortable position. Some decisive action must be taken from one side or the other to break this deadlock.

For the nationalists, it is necessary either to compromise with Imperialism or to go a few steps further towards revolution. Imperialism, on the other hand, is faced with the alternatives: to placate the nationalist bourgeoisie with concessions or to

adopt openly the policy of blood and iron. It is likely that the initiative will come from the imperialist side, which to-day does not dare take the latter course lest the seething volcano of popular discontent erupt, and even the timid bourgeoisie will be driven to revolution. A sense of practical politics counsels moderation, if not in word (for the sake of prestige) at least in practice. A slight gesture of generosity will be welcomed by the nationalist bourgeoisie, who will find therein a way out of this deadlock created by themselves. Some administrative reforms, not in the least jeopardising the British supremacy in matters essential, coupled with measures calculated to remove some of the restrictions on the development of native capitalism, will solve the situation. And this is precisely the solution things in India are heading towards.

Should this temporary solution be looked upon with pessimism? Certainly not; because it is but a stage in the process of undermining Imperialism. Historic reasons prevent the Indian bourgeoisie from launching upon a revolutionary path; but at the same time, their very existence is an objective menace to Imperialism. In every compromise made the former win, however beggarly the compromise may be, and the latter gives up a little of its ground.

Therefore, a compromise made does not end the antagonism, but simply prepares the ground for another one eventually. One concession is inevitably followed by the demand for another concession. This is certainly a very long and tedious process, and the historic necessity of a National Revolution cannot be circumvented within the narrow limits of this contemptible barter. But the Indian bourgeoisie, as they are situated, do not want to strike a short cut. They are not bold enough to throw down the final challenge and unfurl the flag of revolution.

The Indian bourgeoisie are conspicuous for confusion of political thought and timidity of action. The former is expressed through the intellectual poverty of the nationalist movement and the failure to formulate a comprehensive programme of

Nationalism; while the latter causes such a surprising phenomenon as the absence of any faction within the nationalist camp which openly stands for a complete break with the imperial connection. The reason for this confusion of thought and timidity of action is to be sought in the history of the last two hundred years.

Timidity of action is caused by ideological confusion. Objectively, the Indian bourgeoisie are a revolutionary factor; but they are totally unconscious of this revolutionary role of theirs, and what is worse still, they are remarkably inclined towards counter-revolution, or rather, reaction. They desire a politico-economic reconstruction of the country, without disturbing the social status quo. This strongly reactionary social character of the Indian bourgeoisie makes them timid in political action, because it does not allow them to countenance any revolutionary upheaval of the masses. They not only fail to undertake the historic role of the bourgeoisie, to lead the serf in the revolutionary fight against feudalism, but, on the contrary, are defenders of the modern forms of the latter that prevail in India. The landed aristocracy-both the scions of the old feudal class as well as that created by British Imperialism in its earlier days-is one of the pillars that supports British rule. By failing to deal a mortal blow to this pillar, the nationalist bourgeoisie separate themselves from the social foundation of a revolutionary movement. This being the case, they find themselves hopelessly weak when at close grips with the forces of Imperialism. Hence their timidity of action, typified by the absurd programme of ousting British domination by constitutional warfare, and the conspicuous failure of the vanguard of a subject nation to put forth the demand for complete independence.

The struggle of a subject people to free itself from the yoke of foreign domination, however, is not based solely upon the antagonism between the interests of the native bourgeoisie and Imperialism. The objective necessity for the progress of the entire people is the fundamental factor that gives occasion to this

struggle. Any social class, that happens at the given period to stand at the vanguard of the entire people, and which gives expression to this objective necessity, automatically becomes the leader of the struggle. Under normal circumstances, therefore, the bourgeoisie should be the leader of the anti-imperialist struggle in India. Up till now, they have been the leaders; but experience has proved their failure to give an account of themselves. They have failed to rise to the situation. Consequently a movement fraught with immense objective revolutionary possibilities, has not developed speedily enough, and Imperialism still appears to prosper, while sitting on the summit of a seething volcano.

To determine the strength or weakness of the Indian nationalist struggle by the action of the bourgeoisie, therefore, would be misleading. The present position of the nationalist bourgeoisie does not indicate the correct revolutionary perspectives in India. On the other hand, it would be equally mistaken to persist in the notion that the bourgeoisie is the standard-bearer of revolution. This notion has its origin in the fact that, at a certain period of history, the bourgeoisie plays a revolutionary role; since it has been so in those countries, which to-day stand at the van of human progress, it is bound to be so in the rest of the world. A particular inter-relation of social forces rendered the bourgeoisie revolutionary in certain countries at a certain epoch of history. It would be a mechanical reading of history to assert that an identical juxtaposition of social forces will occur in every other country. In fact, here in India the social forces are somewhat differently related, and this difference has made itself felt upon the political thoughts and movement of the country.

Nor is India a solitary instance. Russia in broad outlines belonged to the same category. The revolutionary significance of her bourgeoisie was not very considerable. It was left for the proletariat to carry through the bourgeois revolution-to lead the peasantry in the final struggle against the landed aristocracy. If

it was so in Russia, it is likely to be more so in India, where the bourgeoisie is even more backward than their Russian confreres. The Indian bourgeoisie is even innocent of the radicalism which prevailed among the intellectual wing of the Russian bourgeoisie, in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. All the reactionary cults, which find expression in Gandhism, are more hostile to revolutionary ideas than was the Pan-Slavism of the Russian intellectuals. The Indian bourgeoisie are closely bound up with landlordism, and, the majority of the intellectuals are generally conservative in their social outlook.

This being the case, if we accept the action of the bourgeoisie as the only indicator of revolutionary perspectives in India, there rises before us a rather discouraging vision. It is notorious how the Gandhite leadership got frightened at the revolutionary sweep of the movement it pretended to lead. This fright, coupled with an innate anti-revolutionary conviction, induced the petty bourgeoisie to set their face against the great mass movement which threatened the security of the Empire. They systematically sabotaged the movement, and finally succeeded in throwing it into hopeless confusion.

The next stage was the passing of the leadership into the hands of the bourgeoisie. The new leaders condemned the vacillating tactics of the Gandhites and promised to take up a determined fight against the British Government. The struggle between Gandhism and the relatively conscious bourgeois politics was the outstanding feature of the Movement for nearly a year. It ended in the rout of Gandhism in politics, and the capture of the nationalist movement by the faction which promised to be the pioneer of a well-organised political apparatus of the bourgeoisie. For all practical purposes, the Nationalist demands were not only divorced from the objective necessity of the masses, but even the grievances of the lower middle class were left out of their purview.

The beginning of formulating a nationalist programme, exclusively in accordance with the interests of the bourgeoisie,

was made. Such a beginning could not be made without discarding all tendencies towards revolutionary tactics. This is demanded by the actual position of the Indian bourgeoisie. Unwilling to adopt revolutionary tactics, the nationalist bourgeoisie fall back upon the slow process of undermining the position of Imperialism by stages. Their policy is to secure concession after concession, till the entire power passes from the foreign government to the peoples' representatives. The Indian bourgeoisie as a class is wedded to this reformism and, therefore, hopes to accomplish a revolution within the four corners of a non-existent constitution.

This slow process of reformism, which at first sight looks very futile, possesses a deeper significance, owing to the fact that it is carried out upon a revolutionary background. Although the nationalist bourgeoisie fail to mobilize the revolutionary energy of the masses to back up their demands for reform, Imperialism is fully conscious of the existence of the powder magazine, capable at the slightest ignition of blowing it up. It also knows that the dynamic force of nationalism does not lie either in the reactionary doctrines of the lower middle class intellectuals, nor in the "national demand" of the bourgeoisie, but in the partially manifested will of the masses to revolt against their miserable condition.

Imperialism is reluctantly inclined to make petty concessions to the reformist bourgeoisie (whose impotency it is fully aware of) to prevent the possible determination of the bourgeoisie to fall back upon these forces of revolution. The Indian bourgeoisie have repeatedly proved themselves so averse to revolution, that they would court it only as the last resort, if they do it at all even then. Thus, the minimum concession would keep them dissatisfied and annoying, but out of harm. The burnt cow dreads the fire. The British, government cannot imagine a repetition of the days of 1920-21 without a shudder. They are prepared to bribe the nationalist bourgeoisie to avoid that. Owing to this circumstantial reason, even the timid reformism of the Indian

bourgeoisie objectively produces a revolutionary effect. It cuts into the reserves of Imperialism.

In view of this essentially revolutionary character of the situation in India, every phase of the anti-imperialist struggle has its value in the general scheme of events. In the last year, the nationalist bourgeoisie have been busy in organising the fighting qualities of their class inside a powerful political party. As stated above, owing to deep-seated reasons, the programme and tactics of this party still remain essentially reformist. The party leaders do not fail to indulge in bombastic language and veiled threats which, however, are empty. The party is young, lacking the assets of a radical social outlook, constructive political ideology and a firm determination to act. It has not even succeeded in drawing all the bourgeois elements together. Nevertheless, for the first time in the history of the Indian national movement, it has acted as the conscious spokesman of an entire class, and has therefore, sounded the close of that epoch when Imperialism could play the one section of the bourgeoisie against the other. This is certainly a long step forward.

The new bourgeois party (Swaraj Party) began its life by rejecting what was called the negative policy of Gandhi. The programme of the latter was to boycott pseudo-parliaments granted by Imperialism to allay the post-war discontent of the bourgeoisie. The parliamentary boycott was to be supplemented by the boycott of law-courts, schools and British manufactures. In the first election held on 1920, the nationalists did not take part, they even persuaded a considerable section of the electorate to boycott the polls. The other three items of boycott, however, were not successful as was to be expected. By steadily refusing to countenance the mass revolt, which swept the country in 1919-21, the Non-cooperation movement headed by Gandhi gradually became politically bankrupt. The upper middle class raised the standard of revolt against the political programme of Gandhism, and began the agitation for a "positive programme," which soon assumed the form of "capturing the Councils"

(legislative). The argument was to carry the fight into the enemy's camp; to render the administration of the government impossible by parliamentary obstruction. It sounded reasonable: but the weakness of the programme lay in the fact that the so-called parliaments were nominal and the government was not responsible to them in any sense. Nevertheless, the new party started on the task with enthusiasm.

In the beginning it had to fight the opposition of the petty bourgeoisie, which stuck to the original programme of boycott: but before long the opposition was overcome and the central scene of the nationalist movement was shifted from the National Congress to the Council Chambers. The Nationalists contested the elections in 1923, but failed to secure a majority, except in one province. In the National Assembly as well as in all the provincial Councils they, however, captured such a considerable number of seats that practically everywhere they held the balance. Their failure to secure the majority exposed the impracticability of their programme. The programme, in short, was to bring in what was called the National Demands.

If the Government accepted them, the Nationalists would co-operate with Imperialism; but if the demands were rejected, then they would make government impossible by parliamentary obstruction. Now, since nowhere but in one province they had the majority, there could not be any question of carrying on the obstructionist tactics successfully. The famous National Demands originally were, in short, immediate grant of self-government, which, of course, did not mean separation from the Empire. Nothing even nearly like it. The Reforms Act of 1919 promises another instalment of self-government after ten years. The demand was the immediate grant of this promised instalment. According to the promise, this future instalment was to consist of some more administrative reforms; there is no question of power involved.

Even these "National Demands" could not be presented in their original form, because more moderate nationalist members

would not subscribe to those demands, and without their vote the demands would be rejected. Under the exigencies of forming the nationalist bloc, the demands were watered down until nothing was left. Finally, a resolution recommending a round-table conference between the Government and the nationalists was moved and carried. The Government quietly forgot the resolution. About the same time, MacDonald shook his mailed fist across the ocean. He warned the Indian nationalists, who counted upon the goodwill of the Labour Government, that "no party in Britain would be terrorised by threats of force." There ended the initial stage of the new tactics of bourgeois nationalism. The Government did not reject the Nationalists' demand, if demand it could be called; but neither did it do anything to comply with the demand.

Then began the period of parliamentary obstruction, which naturally could not be very effective, because the Swarajists did not by themselves have a majority, and they could not always count upon the support of the moderate elements. Nevertheless, some rather exciting parliamentary skirmishes took place. Many resolutions were passed over the heads of the Government, none of which were, of course, acted upon, the so-called "parliament" having little control over the administrative apparatus. A sharp battle was fought over the annual budget, a considerable portion of which was rejected. But the government sat tight. The events reached a real parliamentary deadlock first in the Central Provinces, where the Swarajists got a majority. The Council refused to sanction the money for the government; the Governor dissolved the Parliament, assuming all authority in his person, as is provided for in the Reforms Act. Then followed Bengal, another province where the Swarajists have almost a majority. The same issue was also raised there, and the same course was adopted. The constitution does not call for a new election after a dissolution; so that nationalists cannot take the issue before the electorate. Now they are at their wit's end; the government is also in an uncomfortable position, being forced to admit its autocratic character.

While things have been heading towards this little parliamentary crisis, cautious but definite steps were being taken by Imperialism, headed by the Labour Government, to reconnoitre the ground in order to estimate how much should be conceded to rescue the Government of India from this impasse. The first step was the appointment of a Committee to enquire into the administration of the reforms, with the object of finding out if there are any defects in them, and if there are, how they can be removed. Some nationalists of the moderate school sat on this committee. This cautious step, taken principally for temporising, however, unexpectedly led to ugly consequences.

Those leaders of Moderate Nationalism, who five years ago accepted the Reforms with gratitude one after operated with the government all through the hectic days of Non-co-operation, appeared before the Committee one after the other, not to defend, but to denounce the present system of administration as defective and unworkable. With more or less vehemence, all demanded further measures of self-government.

The second step taken was tentative negotiation in London. Of course, no official commitment whatsoever was made. A delegation from the right wing and the centre visited London, ostensibly on its own initiative, but obviously at the desire of the Labour Government. Underground negotiations took place. Even a persistent rumour was set afloat that the leader of the Swarajists, Mr. C.R. Das, had been invited to London. The latter appeared to be well-disposed towards such an invitation. But nothing came of it. The delegation returned home and expressed satisfaction at the result of its trip. The nature of the result, however, still remains unknown. The Nationalists, meanwhile, have inflicted another parliamentary defeat upon the government of India. A project to reform the Public Services has been rejected by them, as totally inadequate to meet the demands of the people.

Thus the matters stand at the time of writing. How will this deadlock be broken? How far will the nationalist bourgeoisie go to make the inevitable compromise? The question of their

surrender does not arise, because they have taken an uncompromising position. On the other hand, how much is Imperialism prepared to concede? There is no doubt that the former will meet the latter more than half-way. What effect will that make upon the nationalist struggle as a whole? The following months will answer these questions. Meanwhile, we can measure up the situation, in the light of experience gathered, and the inter-relation of the forces involved in the struggle.

While a great deal of noise was being made over political questions of paltry importance, concessions of considerable value have been made in the economic field. One of the principal demands of the nationalist bourgeoisie has always been to protect the native industries by a tariff wall. After a continued resistance of two decades, Imperialism has given in on this very vital question. In sequence of the Industrial Commission of 1916-17, according to whose recommendation the economics of Imperialism were placed on a new footing (that of developing India industrially as against the former policy of obstructing) another commission was appointed in 1921 to explore the fiscal ground. The Fiscal Commission was composed of a number of very influential Indian industrialists, together with the representatives of British capital and government. After an exhaustive enquiry of a year, the Fiscal Commission reported, in favour of Protection on principle. In accordance with its recommendation, a Tariff Board was appointed to select the industries which should be protected immediately. The selection fell upon the iron and steel industry.

On behalf of the industry, Tata and Co. demanded a duty of 30 per cent. on manufactured iron and steel imported into the country. The demand was granted with but slight modification. The people will suffer from the high prices that will be caused by this protection to the principal national industry; nevertheless, when the Protection Bill came before the Legislative Assembly, the nationalists abandoned their obstructionist tactics, and voted with the Government. In fact, they complained that the protection

was not extensive enough. The effect of this economic concession will be very far-reaching, and will reflect considerably upon the political field.

The Indian Government has already expressed its intention of placing, as from the coming year, all its orders for railway material in India. This indicates a very rapid development of the iron and steel industry. British industry will suffer in consequence. But Imperialism is not committing suicide. The protection, which will injure British manufacturers, is not meant only for Indian capital. There is another scheme involved in the whole new policy. British capital is being exported to India to build up the iron and steel industry there behind the tariff walls. Incidentally, the most powerful section of the Indian bourgeoisie controlling the steel industry, will be so closely linked up with British banks, that the backbone of bourgeois nationalism will be broken.

The next concession in the economic field is the contemplated removal of the impediment on India's premier industry-textile. Already during the war, this industry was granted protection which, however, could not be fully effective, owing to the excise duty levied upon the cotton manufactures. Now demand for the removal of this excise duty is being pushed vigorously. The demand is not very seriously opposed. It even finds response in the Anglo-Indian Press. Once this contemplated second step is taken, the acuteness of the conflict between the Indian bourgeoisie and. Imperialism will temporarily subside. But the political leaders of the nationalist movement do not belong to the capitalist class. They are mostly intellectuals, and not a few hail from the lower middle class. A reconciliation between British and Indian capital will confirm the reformism of these leaders; but they will keep on pressing for political concessions, in addition to the economic ones. So, in order that the new policy of reconciliation may be worked smoothly, Imperialism will find it advisable to placate the intellectuals also. That means that on both the fronts, economic as well as political, it will be obliged to yield ground, however little it might be in the beginning.

By itself, this conflict is insoluble. Now, if the attempts of Imperialism to smooth it, can be counteracted by action on our part to accentuate the conflict, the state of war that obtains to-day will never end. On the contrary, it will grow acuter every day, and the anti-imperialist struggle will soon exceed the bounds of reformism, and be consciously heading towards revolution. It is obvious what should be the nature of our activities. While supporting the nationalist bourgeoisie in every act of resistance to Imperialism, we should mobilise the revolutionary mass energy which the nationalist bourgeoisie is afraid of touching. The rapid crystallisation of bourgeois nationalism around a reformist programme has left the field clear.

For the first time in the history of the Indian national movement, there will come into existence a political party demanding separation from the Empire. Nationalist elements, which up till now followed the bourgeoisie, will enter this party; because the programme of reformism advocated by the bourgeoisie neglects their interests altogether. To aid the organisation of this party of revolutionary nationalism, is our immediate task. The objective situation is quite ripe, although there are enormous subjective difficulties. The masses are very restive. The peasantry is a veritable inflammable material, while the city proletariat demonstrates its revolutionary zeal whenever there is an opportunity. The process of uniting all these revolutionary elements into an anti-imperialist army is going on steadily.

The collapse of bourgeois nationalism, as expressed by the present Parliamentary deadlock will only accentuate this process. The people will see that the reformist programme of the bourgeoisie does not lead anywhere. The centre of gravity of the nationalist movement will be shifted back to its proper place, namely-mass action. As soon as the rank and file of the nationalist forces are freed from the reformist leadership of the bourgeoisie, they will begin to follow the standard of revolution, because in that case, they will be convinced that the anti-imperialist struggle

cannot be conducted successfully in a different way. There is every indication that things are moving in that direction, and that the next stage of the Indian movement will be a great advance towards revolution.

M. N. ROY.

LEGAL MURDER IN INDIA

Out of 228 men put on their trial for "rioting and arson" at Chauri Chaura, 172 have been sentenced to death find six more practically had suffered the same penalty, because they died in jail of maltreatment during the trial, which lasted almost a full year. Even the records of the British Government in India cannot produce another instance of imperialist "justice" which surpasses this one in its majestic vindictiveness and brutality.

The incidents that led up to this legalized murder were as follows: in February, 1921, the agrarian revolt in the United Provinces, where feudalism reigns supreme, reached a very acute stage. Ignorant of the socially revolutionary character of this discontent of the poor peasantry, the nationalist non-co-operators turned towards this spontaneous outburst. The result was that the rebellious peasantry readily responded to the call of the nationalist agiatiors and took up the slogans of non-co-operation. It was just at the time when the Congress, and particularly Gandhi was talking very much about mass Civil disobedience, the main slogan of which was to be non-payment of rates, and taxes. This electrified the imagination of the exploited peasantry, weighed down generation after generation under exorbitant land rents, and innumerable kinds of feudal dues extracted by the landlords.

The vision of the day when they would not have to bear all these burdens, inspired the peasantry, which all over the province rose in revolt to overthrow the British Raj, which to them was Landlord Raj, and to establish Swaraj, which they called Gandhi Raj. The entire province was like a volcano and the authorities were extremely alarmed.

Thousands of villagers joined the Congress Volunteer Corps, and, in addition to the campaign of attack against the properties of the landlords, took active part in the picketing of the sale of foreign articles and liquor in the market places. Everywhere they came in conflict with the police forces. On February 2 the volunteer pickets were fired upon by the armed police in a market owned by a landlord notorious for his loyalty to the Government and tyranny over the tenants. Two days later, the Volunteer Corps, swelled to almost 3,000 strong by peasants from the adjoining villages, decided to renew their activities in the same bazaar. On their way they had to pass by the police station at Chauri Chaura, at which point they were attacked by the police. After some exchange of brick-bats the police opened fire on the crowd, which grew furious and attacked the police station, set fire to it, and 21 policemen were killed in the affray. Naturally the casualties on the other side must have been much more in view of the fact that while everyone in the police station used firearms, the volunteers had scarcely any. The government has always been very careful in putting the number of the killed and wounded among the volunteers as low as possible. But it is not hard to imagine the result of firing volleys on a crowd of over three thousand. A correspondent of the loyalist press wrote: "the police must have fired on the mob in earnest, but whether it was before the rush or after it I cannot say."

From Chauri Chaura the revolt spread in all directions; but the forces of law and order were mercilessly brought to bear upon the situation and what would otherwise have been a peaceful demonstration of the exploited masses ended in a blood-bath. Armed police and military forces were used freely to "protect life and property," and sores of lives of the expropriated peasantry were sacrificed. In a few days a government communique declared the "situation well in hand," all the centres of disturbance being "under military-control."

Thus was drowned in blood the voice of the exploited peasantry, driven to pre-mature action by government

provocation and the ignorance of the nationalist agitators. Hundreds of arrests were made; 228 of whom were finally sent up for trial. They were charged with "murder, arson, and being members of unlawful assembly." After a trial which lasted eight months, bourgeois justice has given its verdict: 172 will be "hanged by the neck until dead."

The facts speak for themselves. No comments are necessary. This justice surpasses in brutality the doctrine of "tooth for a tooth, eye for an eye." 172 lives must be taken for 22, but bourgeois justice conveniently forgets about scores of poor peasantry that fell before the rifles of the police and military. Who is going to revenge those soldiers of freedom? Not bourgeois justice, but their own class when victorious. The reason for such brutal ferocity is that in Chauri Chaura and the incidents that preceded and followed it, the growth of a force threatening the rights of the landlords was to be noticed. British imperialism has proved how ably it will defend the property of those loyal to it. 172 lives will be sacrificed on the altar of landlordism in league with imperialism. A lesson for the Nationalists.

ON THE GAYA CONGRESS

Dear Comrade...

It was a treat to read, in your letter of Jan. 12, such a lively description of what happened at Gaya. It is true that nothing much happened, but this is no surprise to us. Without meaning to be egoists, we can say we have been predicting it for months. It is but part of the historic process, - the ups and downs of a great movement. We welcome it because we know how to meet it. What more can be expected from a crowd of narrow-visioned, timid, semi-intellectual petty-bourgeois!

In their hands, the Congress could not meet a better fate. To you or those like you, "Non-violent Non-cooperation" may be a case of political wisdom or expediency, but to the stalwarts of pure Gandhism it is a fetich, and positively counter-revolutionary at that.

You have only to remember the choice remarks of St. Rajagopal in opposing the "Independence Resolution" to understand the real character of this crowd. When we read that the defeat of this resolution was hailed with shouts of "Gandhi Maharaj ki jai!" we can only congratulate ourselves upon having found a philosophy which enables us to untangle so easily every complicated social and historical phenomenon. Yes, once more the Empire is saved, once more the blessed Indian society is rescued from the threat of a Revolution Victory to the name of the Mahatma and to his cult of Non-Violence! Alleluja, Amen! Dear Comrade, you can read your own interpretation into the social philosophy of Gandhism, but to a Marxist it is nothing more nor less than counter-revolutionary cant, perhaps unconscious of its reprehensible significance. Tolstoy did much harm to the progress of the revolution in Russia and his Indian disciple will not play any other role in the Indian revolution.

The publicity given to our programme by the kindness of Reuter has precipitated a situation which the leaders of Non-cooperation have always been extremely anxious to prevent. 'The true colour of the Nationalism of the Right as well as of the Left, to say nothing of the pure Gandhite Centre, has, been thoroughly exposed. I wonder if you had the opportunity of reading all the press-comments. If the Government ever succeeded in clever intrigue, this is the most successful of all. Our Nationalist leaders allowed themselves to be terrified into inactivity, and have at last been driven, however reluctantly, to define Swaraj. The. Congress has forfeited all claim to any distinction from the Moderates by proving conclusively that none of its leaders, whether Orthodox Non-Cooperators or the Das-Nehru-Kelkar combination, will go any further than the Liberals.

Thus the utter hypocrisy of calling the latter all sorts of names is exposed. The Congress won't have anything to do with our harmless reformist programme of advanced democratic ideas, because, forsooth, it threatens the absolute and monopoly

rights of the landlords and big capitalists. And who are these grandees? Are they not that salt of the Indian earth, to protect and further whose sacred interests is the main object of the Liberal League? Our doughty leaders of Non-Cooperation are no less concerned about the rights of the upper classes, rank reactionary landlordism included, than the heroes of the Liberal League. The latter stand for "law and order", and the followers of the cult of Non-Violence stand for nothing less - Deshbandhu Das' masterly exposition of Constitutional Law notwithstanding.

Only our Non-Cooperating heroes go one step further on the road to reaction and counter-revolution,.- they stick to Landlordism, which ha.s become too reactionary a commodity, even for the Liberal League. Poor Mother India, and still poorer Indian "masses", to look for salvation from such patriots and parsons!

It has been proved at Gaya, if proof were still needed, that the National. struggle can be led, neither by the reactionary petty-bourgeoisie acting through the orthodox "No-Changers" under the divine guidance of St. Rajagopal, nor by the radical intellectuals desirous of harking back to the folds of Constitutionalism, under the guise of loyalty to the memory of Tilak. Between these two centripetal forces, Bengal's "Sentimental Tommy" croaked. Before he could wreck the Councils, the Councils wrecked him.

What is to be done? A new party must be organized. There are good revolutionary elements in both the factions, led astray by personalities and fooled by empty phrases. They should be gathered under the banner of a new party whose social basis, however, must be the workers and peasants. Therefore, its programme has to follow the lines of that published by us. We need not worry about the orthodox No-Changers. They are dead. The real danger is from the Right, - from the "Responsive Cooperators". The Congress, in the hands of this element, will become more political, but will be steered even farther from revolution. The new party is indeed a very queer combination.

It is a coalition of the rebels of the Right as well as the Left against the imbecility and quietism of the Centre. Owing to lack of courageous leadership, the Left Wing, that is, the objectively revolutionary elements, could not stand out clearly at Gaya. Their position was merely negative, so that no one could distinguish them from the "Pro-Changers" of the Right, - the Kelkar-Azmal-Malavya crowd. This was the fatal mistake made at Gaya, and to repair this mistake is our task.

How can this be done? Propaganda must be made, to crystallize the ideology of the Left. And the best propaganda is through action. Mere talk about "going back to the masses" will not take us very far. Everybody swears by the "masses", - even St. Rajagopal. Then unfortunately, our de-classed, sentimental revolutionaries do not understand the difference between militant working-class organization and the reactionary cult of "back to the villages!" If we start a theoretical discussion now about Panchayat and Soviet, bourgeois democracy and the Indian "village republics", we will not get anywhere. And many will end by doing what some of our Indian Solomons have already done, - to invent the stupid and meaningless term "Communalism", as a substitute for Communism, - obnoxious to the apostles of the Panchayat (the "purest" form of democracy). No, we will have to adopt a more exhilarating, more inspiring way, the way of action. We must find a means to drive the declassed, sentimental revolutionaries out of the rut of metaphysical politics, into the "devil-dance" of mass-action. They must be brought face to face with those "masses" whom they talk about so glibly, till they cease to become an abstract term. Those who survive this acid test will become the standard-bearers of the Left-Wing Party which is a historic necessity, and which alone can save the national movement from its threatening reversion to Constitutionalism.

If we have a bold and clear-visioned leadership, it will be easy to begin this new campaign. We must be ready to catch at every opportunity to stir the people to action. In many cases we

will fail, but ultimate success will be assured if we keep resolutely on. Instances for inaugurating such mass-action are not lacking. Here in this atrocious legal massacre of Chauri Chaura we have an unparalleled opportunity, but who is there in India to seize it? The Congress is criminally indifferent. It has nothing more to say or do than to express its virtuous aversion to such an act of brutality. In their heart of hearts, our Nationalist leaders are votaries of the system of "law and order", which perpetrates such legal crimes in the name of justice. And was it not the Congress which, under the leadership of the Mahatma, denounced these dangerous "rowdies" at the very outset?

Therefore, objectively speaking, the blood of these 172 condemned men is no less on the heads of our leaders than on that of British imperialism. Those who in every critical moment reveal themselves to be at one with the forces of an autocratic state in putting down the spontaneous upheavals of a suffering people, cannot be the leaders of a struggle for liberation. It is idle, therefore, to expect the Congress to take any action about the Chauri. Chaura trial.

But we should come forward, push these dummy leaders off their pedestals, and call upon the nation to rise in defence of these victims of Landlordism and the State. You are in a position to act. Call an emergency meeting of the Trade Union Commission and move a resolution that an appeal be issued to the labour organizations of India to demand the release of the Chauri Chaura victims. This demand should be backed by the threat of a General Strike.

Call upon the Trade Union Congress on one hand, and the National Congress on the other, to endorse this appeal and to back it up. If they accept this suggestion, by one stroke of the pen.(a perfectly non-violent method), you push these sluggish bodies on the road towards revolution. If they refuse, they do so at the risk of forfeiting all claim to leadership in the eyes of the masses. Agitation in favour of such a resolution should be carried on within the ranks of every labour-union in India. The

self-appointed leaders, - the Baptistas, ChamanIs, the Andrews, Sens and Morenos, - will oppose, at least sabotage this move. But there again, we will find these sly political careerists in our grip, and can hold them up before the workers in their true colours as defenders of upper-class interests. The step needed to start this great mass-action, is altogether within the limits of the law and of non-violence, - merely a resolution of protest, backed up by an appeal to the country, against such a horrible crime as the killing of 172 men.

In the course of the agitation, many political lessons can be brought home. Enthusiasm among the workers should be awakened by explaining the genesis of the Chauri Chaura riot, and what constitutes the real "crime" of these condemned men. The identity of working-class interests, the need for working-class organization, the necessity for union between the workers and peasants etc., will all be brought into relief. The action thus started is imbued with immense possibilities. It could develop into a fight for the freedom of speech and of assembly, as well as of the right to resort to direct action to enforce these and other demands for elementary rights. Only by the revolutionary means of mass-action can our movement be rescued from its present inanition and despondency.

The new party which would be born of this action, would grow strong and powerful in the same healthy atmosphere. Once a mass action was started in India upon such an issue, we could count upon the support of the revolutionary world proletariat.

Our programme, condemned alike by the Nationalist and the imperialist, makes provision for such revolutionary mass-action. Only within the limits of such a programme can Non-Cooperation ever become a live political force. But first of all, belief in the sacredness or Property, and then sheer cowardice prevents the National Congress from countenancing such a programme. Just imagine how reactionary a movement is, in which very few are ready to subscribe to the programme of an

Indian Republic based upon the principle of universal suffrage! Even universal suffrage is too much for our holy nationalists.

On the one hand, Baptista Chacha discovers the hand of British Die-Hards behind us, and at the other extreme, the "Independent" dismisses our programme because there is no room for "Love" in it! Deshbandhu Das will have no bourgeois democracy, but lacks the courage to push his thoughts to their logical conclusions. He is an apostle of the "masses", but the idea of class-conflict stressed in our programme, pains and horrifies him. He wants "freedom for the whole nation" that damnable lie which constitutes the basis of modern Democracy. He gets entangled in such hopeless confusion and contradictions only because he is a sentimentalist and not a revolutionary. We need revolutionary leaders, who can only appear with a new party. And this new party can and will be born only in action, which is the crying need of the moment. On the one hand, the "Pro-Changers" are busy discovering some saving grace in the Reforms, while on the other, the "No-Changers" will end by retiring to the Himalayas. The political field will thus be swept clear for the appearance of revolutionary leaders.

February 15, 1923.

ON THE BASIS OF A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Dear Comrade...

Non-Cooperation as a political movement received its funeral ceremony at Gaya. From all reports, the Congress has met precisely the same fate that we have been predicting during the last twelve months. Marxism is a wonderful philosophy, is it not? It has made of history such an exact science. I wonder how long it will take before this modern revolutionary method of thinking is introduced into our movement. The forces of national revolution are today scattered in confusion. We propose to rally them in a new party. It is not that we have to manufacture a following. We need simply hoist a flag which will appeal to the imagination of those objectively revolutionary forces, that were never understood by our religious Non-cooperators, nor by the rational Extremists of the Pro-Change Party. So objectively speaking, we hold that our party has a following. As Marxians, we declare: "Had there not existed the social element to form such a party, there could be no idea of forming it". You need not feel discouraged because you do not represent such a motley crew as the Non-Cooperation Congress. You and those who think like you, are the real representatives of the Indian people, and alone have the right to speak in their behalf.

We are agreed on the necessity of. forming a new party. What is the first step to be taken in this direction The adoption of a Programme of this Party. We have already published the outline of a Programme, with certain important clauses of which you do not agree. You take exception to the "abolition of Landlordism", and to "agitation" against the bourgeoisie. Your reasons are just those that forced Gandhi to call for the shameful retreat at Bardoli. He was faced with the problem of choosing between the financial aid of the landlords and capitalists on one hand, and the revolutionary energy of the masses on the other.

The Bombay merchants and mill-owners would not pay their promised contributions to the Tilak-Swaraj Fund if the Congress supported the strikes and demonstrations of the workers. The reactionary lower middle-class was so closely tied to the apron-strings of the feudal lords of Oudh, that it would rather see the great Non-Cooperation Movement degenerate into a prayer association and spinning guild than to brook the revolutionary agrarian upheaval threatening the security of landlordism. Hence, the shameful betrayal by the Congress of the great mass-movement that culminated in the semi-insurrectionary outbreaks in Bombay and the United Provinces.

This revolutionary action of the masses was denounced as "Hooliganism", and banned in the name of "Non-Violence". But what was the social reason behind this theory of Non-Violence? Was it not the anxiety for the vested interests of the native upper class and the apprehension of losing the problematical support

of the rich? By stoutly denouncing the revolt of the exploited peasantry, and re-affirming the sacred rights of the feudal lords, the Congress killed a great mass movement; - but can you say that by these reprehensible tactics, the landlords of Oudh have been made any more patriotic, or better said, less loyal and reactionary The recent controversy over the U. P. District Board Bill should have taught us a lesson.

As for the financial support of the capitalists. The way in which attempts were made to manipulate the entire Swaraj Fund for profiteering in Khaddar proves the real character of the patriotism of the merchants and manufacturers. No, my dear comrade, it is a mistake to give the interests of the upper classes the first place in the struggle for national liberation. If we sacrifice the dynamic forces of mass-action in favour of the financial support of the landlords and capitalists, we shall have to record innumerable Bardolis. It speaks very badly for our revolutionary outlook if we have not yet learned to recognise which social element is the backbone of our movement.

I do not say that we should fail to enlist the services of all possible revolutionary elements in the struggle. We must not lose our sense of proportion. The social character of the nationalist movement is bourgeois, - therefore the middle classes will play an important part in it. But owing to the abnormal development of our history (the fact of the British Conquest), the Indian bourgeoisie does not today possess the same revolutionary significance as did its prototype in Europe in the middle of the last century. Therefore, the Indian. Revolution will not be successful purely as a Bourgeois Revolution. Our bourgeoisie is too under-developed, too weak, too timid, to lead a revolutionary struggle. They must be aided by some other social factor, more revolutionary. Therefore, the programme of our movement cannot be confined within the limits of bourgeois interests and aspirations.

Then look at the question from a historical point of view. What will the National Independence of India mean? The victory

of the Indian bourgeoisie! As Marxians, we cannot but laugh at the Revivalist theory that India is a special creation of God. The triumph of the bourgeoisie means the disruption of Feudalism, because the latter is detrimental to the capitalist mode of production. Therefore, objectively speaking, the programme of National Independence sounds the death-knell to Landlordism. Why should we not have the courage to explain this programme in such simple language as will be within the understanding of the poor peasantry, and make the national struggle a vital issue to them?

Are we less revolutionary than the heroes of the Liberal League Even they are clarifying their socio-economic outlook and only look at the tussle going on within the Council of the U. P. If the Ministerial Liberal will not break away from their feudal leading-strings, they will ere long forfeit their title to lead the big bourgeoisie. The rise of the Independent Nationalist Party in Bengal is a sign of the times. Have you noticed that the programme of this new political party of the liberal bourgeoisie includes the "abolition of landlordism", and many of those "welfare" clauses which seem to have terrified you in our Programme? It is not a Communist Programme that we have drafted. It is a simple, democratic document, adapted to our "special circumstances". We must dismiss the. hope of securing the help of the landed aristocracy. The bourgeoisie must be with the national movement. They cannot leave it, nor can they fight alone. They must have our support. So we must enter the struggle consciously, and not as a mere appendage of the bourgeoisie. More on this question later.

March 8, 1923.

ON STUDENTS AND THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE

My dear …

While emphasizing our disagreement with the theory that the intellectuals are the salt of the earth, and that their holy mission is to "uplift the downtrodden", we do not overlook the

role that the radical intellectuals play in every revolutionary movement. Therefore, we do not depreciate the necessity of making our ideas known among that section of the students of India who represent the radical tendency of the young intellectuals. Such propaganda is all the more necessary in our country, because of the fact that a considerable section of our intelligentsia is hopelessly bound up with the socio-religious reaction. Under the influence of such deplorable leadership, the minds of our youths are cramped by unhealthy ideas. A determined struggle has to be waged in order to liberate these youthful minds from the clutches of reaction, masquerading as great intellectual lights especially produced in India.

The reactionary mental outlook of the average Indian student becomes palpable when he comes to a foreign country. For example, the students' association in Germany is a dead organization.

The leaders stoutly refuse to allow their charges to have any political food, while the rank and file members are sublimely ignorant of everything taking place in the world round about them, although their ignorance is by no means greater than that of their leaders. If in an environment where comparatively more freedom is enjoyed, such a mental lethargy is to be noticed, it is no wonder if things are still worse in India. Therefore it is that any work undertaken by the students among themselves, to come in contact with the world liberation movement is of the very greatest importance.

There is no use in following the beaten track, which has proved so disastrous in all the advanced countries; neither will it do to recoil within the shell of our ancient Hindu culture. The students of India must learn the lessons of history. It is highly dangerous to idealize the student-life of Europe and America. The universities of all these countries are the worst strongholds of reaction, and the students who socially belong to the undermined stratum of the bourgeoisie, are found today actively allied with the blackest forces of counter-revolution. Such an

example cannot be beneficial for our youths who aspire to shoulder the task of regenerating a nation.

A more revolutionary inspiration is needed if the Indian student is to play a redeeming rôle in the drama of national revolution. Our people are today caught in the throes of a great upheaval which affects every aspect of life; therefore an intellectual revolution is inevitable. We pride ourselves so much on India's intellectual greatness, but can we trade forever on the worm-eaten pages of the Upanishads? What was good for the society thousand years ago cannot be clung to as the panacea for today. To do so is not a sign of intellectual greatness or freedom. It is stagnation, from which the intellectual life of our nation must be saved. This great historical task rests upon the shoulders of the radical wing of our student body.

Every great revolution of the past has produced its intellectual giants, but what has India so far done in this respect? Have our would-be intellectual leaders done anything more than attempt the futile task of pouring old wine into new bottles, - of paraphrasing our old scriptures in an effort to adapt them to new conditions? This is no proof of intellectual greatness, but of intellectual bankruptcy. Sterility in the field of original thinking, - not to mention in the field of revolutionary thought, - is the outstanding characteristic of our intelligentsia. This deplorable condition must be altered before our intellectuals can lay any claim to participate in the regeneration of our society.

Such a miserable plight is certainly not due to any innate inferiority on the part of our people. It is the result of abnormal conditions produced by political subjugation, which has stunted our national growth in every direction. Therefore the termination of this subjugation is the gateway to any real improvement. But this subjugation will not be terminated by hugging the old worn-out socio-religious doctrines and dogmas as a precious heritage, but by discarding them in so far as they are a bondage to progress, and by readjusting them to the new conditions, if they can stand the test of the accumulated human knowledge whose benefit

has been denied us by the intervention of Imperialism. The intellectuals of India will earn a place in history only if they can repudiate their traditional allegiance to the - vested interests and become the focus for the forces of revolution. In order to play this rôle, our Indian youth must come in contact with the international movement of revolutionary youths, and refuse any longer to seek inspiration in the reactionary student body of the universities of Europe and America.

Our young boys and girls, the men and women of to-morrow, who are groping for a way out of the darkness of economic privation and intellectual blindness, will be surprised to learn that all over the world, hundreds of thousands of youths, all workers or the children of workers, are growing up with the vision of a new society, and are already lending their help, by active organization and propaganda, towards the destruction of the present social system of organized coercion and exploitation, exercised through the State, public education, religion, literature and philosophy, the press, the cinematograph, and all the other ramifications of bourgeois culture and civilization. It will be a historical day for India when her children will break away, not only from the chains of foreign domination, but also from that mental bondage to the worn-out dogmas of our past religious and social traditions, which our reactionary pseudo-intellectuals pant out in the garb of sweet phrases.

Our Indian youth can break away from this bondage only by drinking deep at the fountain of revolutionary thought that inspires the movement of the International of Communist Youths. Many a prejudice must be overcome, many an illusion forgotten before the scions of our middle-class can accept the light shining out of the darkness of slumland. But there is no other way. If our intellectuals sincerely desire to regenerate themselves and to be of any use in the creation of a free society of the future, they will have to forsake their mistaken notions of superiority; they must abandon their conscious or unconscious subservience to the upper classes; they must come down from the proud

heights of intellectual isolation; they must cease to feel themselves intellectual aristocrats, - in short, they must accept the leadership of the working-class. Is Young India prepared to do so? If so, then a great and glorious future lies ahead.

If not, it converts itself into an advocate of slavery, and nothing but utter degeneration lies in store. The great revolution that convulses the world today will remake the entire human society, and India will not be an exception. Neither Arabindaism nor Gandhism nor any of the other imbecile 'isms that cloud the vision of our Indian youth, will be able to prevent it. It is the peculiar function and privilege of intellectualism to reflect the thought currents generated by the evolution of material conditions. It is not in itself creative; it can only serve as the vehicle of expression. As long, therefore, as intellectualism gives expression to something living, vigorous, young, creative, it ennobles itself thereby; but usually it prostitutes itself by serving as the champion and defender of the established order.

The present established order, - bourgeois society, - has become threadbare whereever it exists. India is not excluded, because the social order idealized by our pseudo-intellectuals is a petrified corpse on whose grave modern bourgeois society was reared. It does not require too clever an insight to detect the nature. of the cure-all which our intellectual lights prescribe, not only for India, but for the entire human society. It is a reversion to theocracy or patriarchy, or at best utopia. None of these social orders, real or imaginary, is a special creation of Indian genius. Every developing nation has a similar Golden Age to look back upon, whose "ideal" state of freedom was undermined by the development of economic forces that eventually gave rise to bourgeois society, which in the course of evolution, has also become untenable. These simple lessons of human history, the ABC of Social Science, still remain unlearned by our young intellectuals.

The hypocrisy of bourgeois civilization has been thoroughly exposed. Capitalism has played out its rule. A new society is in

the throes of birth. All this is true; yet it does not follow that India can steal history, nor go backwards at the bidding of that moribund reaction which binds the majority of our intellectual leaders hand and foot. No, this cannot be done. What can be done however, is to hasten and in some degree modify the full effects of each successive period by an intensive study and assimilation of the accumulated experience of history. Herein lies an opportunity for our young intellectuals to justify their existence in a revolutionary epoch.

To plunge into history in order to present to the struggling Indian people the entire experience gained by the human mind in the fields of social science, of politics, of philosophy, during the last hundred and fifty years; to present this treasure in synthesized form, is a great mission. Young India can and should undertake this noble task; but in order to be able to fulfill it, a revolutionary inspiration should give purpose and meaning to this historic mission. India cannot be led back to the patriarchal Golden Age; the slum-dwellers of Bombay, Calcutta and our other great centers of industry cannot be induced to return to their villages; Capitalism cannot any more be "spiritualized" than it can be kept out of India. But what we can do is to see that the Indian people are benefitted consciously by the knowledge and experience gained in other lands through blood and tears; to so shape the destinies of India that she lives through in a shorter period of time that epoch which lasted two centuries in other parts of the world. Let us equip ourselves to aid in doing this.

May 10, 1923.

ON PATRIOTISM

My dear Friend

In speaking of the political side of our movement, I must first of all mention the present deplorable state of depression, which is shared also by you. It is indeed very encouraging to hear that even a partial knowledge of the work begun by us, that

is the Communist Party, has made you think that perhaps after all, it is not necessary for every honest revolutionary to put an end to his life. I prefer the word "revolutionary" to that of "patriot", because although in a given historical epoch patriots possess a revolutionary significance, this does not hold true of them at all times and under every circumstance. For example: Mussolini, Poincaré, the American Ku Klux Klan, the Manchurian bandit Chang Tsu Lin, Amir Amanulla of Afghanisthan, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Surendra Nath Bannerji, Gandhi, Barin Ghose and yourself are all patriots; but imagine what a gulf divides these men one from the other, and what divergent ideals each of them represents! "Patriotism", therefore, is a very misleading term, which often possesses a very sinister significance. A movement which is based only on patriotism cannot go very far in these days. Pure Indian patriotism smacks of reaction, and produces Gandhis and Arabindas, about whom you have no more illusions.

I daresay you yourself do not know quite clearly why you have lost these illusions You are a patriot, - as good a one as any among these super-patriots. You are very sincere in your patriotism, but so too are they. So there must be something wrong in the very conception of patriotism, which can lead men to pursue such contrary and often contradictory goals. Actuated by the same spirit of patriotism, one man reads the Gita, one sends missionaries to America to preach the gospel of Sri Ramkrishna, one orders the whole nation to spin, one cooperates in the working of the Montagu Reforms, another throws bombs, and there are even some who drink three bottles of whiskey a day. There is absolutely no reason to doubt that all of them are equally patriotic. Every one of them loves the Motherland, serves her, worships her, glorifies her, idealizes her, - almost every one of these Indians believes implicitly in the providential mission of India to spiritualize the world. Yet in spite of all this, these patriots and the philosophy they preach do not satisfy you any longer, although there was a time when you accepted their teachings as infallible. This shows that there is some fundamental

difference between your patriotism and that of the leaders in whom you have lost faith. In a subsequent letter, I will deal with this philosophical aspect in more detail.

First of all, let me assure you that there is absolutely no reason to lose heart. In every great revolutionary movement, a period of depression is to be found. It is generally the turning-point. The time has come when we Indians must forget a lot of our cherished ideals, which have proved false and reactionary. We have to enter into a new stage of our struggle, with a new vision and a new determination. Those social elements, whom I prefer to call revolutionaries, instead of using the more ambiguous term patriots, instinctively feel the need for this new orientation. They are utterly dissatisfied with the old and worn-out theories handed out by leaders who have proved themselves to be false prophets in the actual struggle.

To gather these revolutionary elements together into a new political party is our immediate object. This is the only way out of the present terrible state of depression that reigns in our movement today. So far, the reasons for the organization of such a revolutionary party have been put forward through the medium of our organ and other publications. As you are already aware, after reading these, this new party is to be a party of the masses, - of the workers and peasants, organized on the basis of their class interests. The labouring masses alone can conquer freedom for our country. But if they are to be led into the fight, it should be for their own welfare, and not for that of the upper classes.

We do not seek to propagate this idea as an ethical or humanitarian proposition. The whole question is one of social economics. The collapse of the Non-Cooperation Movement has demonstrated that the enthusiasm of the masses, once aroused, cannot be maintained for any length of time by mere sentimental effusions. This collapse has also exposed the shallowness of middle-class patriotism. Therefore, in the phase that is to come, the movement should be based upon more solid ground. It should be built upon the foundation of material interests, - the

material interests of the majority of our people, or in other words, of the working class.

Here you see the fundamental difference between spiritual patriotism and revolutionary patriotism. The former says that if the masses will not be spiritualized, let them go to the devil, and we will console ourselves with bottles of whiskey or the Upanishads; but the latter says that Nationalism is no moonshine. It is a material question. We want freedom, not to save the world, but to save ourselves. The struggle between India and Britain is not a cultural one, as Imperialism likes to preach through such lips as Lord Ronaldshay's. It is a struggle for existence. Therefore, it is of greater and more vital interest to the labouring masses than to the upper classes. The masses hear the full brunt of imperialist exploitation. They are hungry; they suffer from epidemics; they and their children are born, live and die in the rankest poverty, ignorance and disease. But our upper classes live in comfort, even opulence, in spite of British rule. Thus, so long as the masses of our people are not rallied, the national struggle cannot be successful.

But the masses cannot be rallied and made to take an active and conscious part in the struggle, unless they see that the object is not to revive the Brahmanical Age of priestly exploitation, nor to aggrandize the merchant princes of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay, - but to promote the welfare of the vast producing class; to give land to the peasants and bread to the workers of India. The philosophy that dominated Indian nationalism until today, was oblivious to this fundamental problem. Hence its collapse. And this collapse gives rise to pessimism and a corresponding sense of depression on the part of those who were the votaries of this philosophy heretefore. But a revolutionary has nothing to fear. He need not, be disheartened; on the contrary, there is ground for hope, because those leaders whom he has followed until now with such blind allegiance, thinking they could do everything, today throw off their masks and declare that they will not do anything revolutionary. The

debacle of such leaders really strengthens our movement, because it helps the revolutionary elements to come forward and assert themselves upon the situation.

Spiritual patriotism tried to measure itself against a revolutionary situation, and failed miserably. Our spiritual patriots wisely tell us that the world is not yet ready for their lofty teachings, and some of their followers find consolation in this idea. But there are others who cannot reconcile themselves with such sublime impotence; their revolutionary nature seeks ever new paths of activity, and as soon as the right one is indicated, they will shake off their temporary depression. It is from such elements, together with the vast discontented masses of the Indian working-class, that the material for the revolutionary of the future will be brought together and welded into one compact and homogeneous whole, - into a political party of the masses which will hold aloft the banner of material betterment at one and the same time and as an indispensable condition in the battle for political Swaraj.

Yours for a decent and speedy burial for our spiritual Swarajists.

June 12, 1923.

ON ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAMME

Dear Comrade...

The work undertaken by us is of historic significance, since the appearance of a working-class party in the political field is an objective necessity. There is no gainsaying the fact that the workers and peasants of India can no longer remain an appendage of bourgeois nationalism, which is decidedly antagonistic to any movement calculated to affect in the least the present state of social relationships. The object of bourgeois nationalism is the transference of political power from British Imperialism to the native upper classes. Our nationalists of all shades of opinion are hostile to the very idea of classes and class-

struggle. This hypocritical attitude is due to their desire of preventing the growth of class-consciousness among the workers and peasants. Bourgeois nationalism wants to exploit the ignorant but rebellious working-masses in the name of Freedom, which when realized, will mean the freedom of the native bourgeoisie. In order to keep this class-character of bourgeois nationalism confused, the nationalist leaders decry any movement which gives predominance to class-interest over national interest. But the experience of the last two years has proved unquestionably how those very nationalists who preach the doctrine that India is immune from the disease of class-war, have not hesitated to sacrifice national interests for the interests of the native propertied classes. They have done this in every crisis that has overtaken the Non-Cooperation movement. Instances of such sacrifice of the national interests, of such betrayals are numerous and need not be cited here, since they are too well-known. These repeated betrayals have ruined the nationalist struggle, but have demonstrated at the same time, the class-character of bourgeois nationalism.

When it becomes evident that the programme of bourgeois nationalism cannot include the interests of the toiling masses, the latter must enter upon the period of an independent political existence, in order to fight simultaneously for their own economic and social, as well as political emancipation. The Indian working-class cannot be led to the anti-Imperialist struggle with the programme of bourgeois nationalism, but on the other hand, the anti Imperialist struggle cannot be successful without the active participation of the working-class. Therefore, not only to achieve its own economic emancipation, but also to attain the immediate object of national freedom, the organization of an independent working-class party has become essential.

The "national independence" sought for by our bourgeoisie will make scarcely any provision for the economic betterment of the toiling masses, but this does not alter the fact that the burden of imperialist exploitation falls most heavily upon the

shoulders of our workers and peasants, and consequently, that the latter must first of all light for national liberation. As a matter of fact, the Indian workers and peasants are much more interested in the struggle for national freedom than the middle-classes themselves, because for them, there remains no half-way house of Compromise with Imperialist rule, which bourgeois nationalism seeks. Thus, looked at from every angle of vision, the necessity for the working-class to play an independent political role becomes evident. The party that must be organized, the party of workers and peasants, will be the conscious vanguard of the Indian working-class in its struggle, first for national, then for complete economic and social liberation.

Now permit me to make some general observations on the subject of a Programme for such a party. The task of elaborating a theoretical programme must be reserved for some future occasion. Not only the theoretical programme of Social Revolution, but even that, of National Revolution remains still to be elaborated.

For the present, we must content ourselves with adopting a Programme of Action, - a programme which will rally, the working-class in the present struggle against foreign domination and prepare it, at the same time, for the future struggle. But a Programme of Action presupposes that the object to be realized by such action, has already been defined. In other words, while speaking of the immediate interests of the workers and peasants, the larger issues should not be excluded from our programme. Such a tendency nevertheless, is to be noticed in many of our comrades who are eager to organize the working-class into an independent political party.

The first and foremost problem that every political party in India must face and solve, is the problem of national liberation. The fate of every party depends ultimately upon its ability to find a solution of this problem. The bankruptcy of the Non-Cooperation movement is due to its utter failure to find this solution. We must be careful that the same fate in somewhat

different form, does not overtake our party of the working-class, once it is organized. "To secure economic relief to the producing classes", which appears to be the aim of many of our sincerest comrades, cannot be the programme of a political party which fails to declare that "economic relief cannot be secured within the framework of Imperialist domination." The mere formulation of such an aim obliges us to challenge the political domination of the Indian people by a foreign power.

It will not make any fundamental difference in the economic situation of the masses, if foreign domination is eventually readjusted to the demands of the native upper-classes, in order to secure their services in the joint exploitation of the Indian workers and peasants. Our party, which must stand for the liberation of the producing classes from all forms of exploitation, cannot leave the question of national liberation outside its programme, because national liberation, which means the release of all the forces of social production now held in check by Imperialism, is the first step towards our ultimate goal, which is the end of all class-domination.

Some comrades may argue, - in fact this argument has already been advanced - that we should leave aside the question of national freedom, since it hardly concerns the working-class in its present state of consciousness, but will unnecessarily bring the wrath of the Government upon the head of our party. This is a very vulgar way of looking at the situation. Firstly, if it is true that the working-class fails to show any conscious interest in the question of national liberation, then all the more necessary does it become for our party to take up the question in right earnest, in order to show the working-class how vitally it is concerned in the question. To a certain extent it is true that pure bourgeois nationalism cannot create any active and lasting enthusiasm among the masses; it is because of this failure of bourgeois nationalism to draw the masses into the struggle for national freedom, that the organization of a working-class party has become a historic necessity, as already pointed out. The

working-class will become actively interested in, the national struggle, so soon as this struggle is carried on not exclusively from the bourgeois point of view, but as the first stage of the fight for socio-economic emancipation. To show that the national struggle is really such, is the immediate task of our party.

Secondly, it is idle to think that our party can escape the wrath of the government, if it is really the party we mean it to be. We cannot fight for the economic interests or the producing masses without at once threatening the power and position of those classes that thrive on unearned income, and so soon as the slightest indication of this threat is noticed, the entire forces of the State will begin to move with the object of crushing those from whom this threat comes. There is but one way of avoiding the hostility of the government; that is the way of Reformism. If the object of our party be to alleviate the sufferings of the toiling masses with the aid and sanction of the bourgeoisie, then we may expect to be left unmolested. But is it worth while to organize a new party with this object?

There are already enough of such humanitarian and philanthropic organizations in existence. As Marxists, we know that any efforts made with such an object will be only gilding the chains of slavery. The economic freedom of the producing classes can be conquered only through a revolutionary struggle from beginning to end! This fact should be clearly and unequivocally expressed in our programme. A few ambiguous generalities will not take us very much farther than the reformist and utopian slogans of the nationalists.

The next point I wish to touch upon is the slogan of "Labour Swaraj". Whatever this phrase may mean, it cannot be the programme of our party. Such a slogan will inevitably lead us to elaborating schemes of Swaraj. What is meant by Labour Swaraj? How is it to be attained? How can we speak of Labour Swaraj, which means, if anything serious is meant by it, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, when the very question of Swaraj, - that is, of National Independence, remains unsolved To speak

of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat presupposes the existence of a proletarian class consciously working for that dictatorship. But before the Indian working-class can take up the slogan of Dictatorship, it has to go through a period of political education which can only be gained in the struggle against Imperialism, - a struggle carried on, not for the benefit and under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, but with a class-programme, based consciously on the interests of the workers and peasants, and led by a revolutionary vanguard, - the Political Party of the Working-Class.

Therefore, our slogan should not be the vague one of "Labour Swaraj", which cannot be realised for a long time yet, but for a National Democratic Government, based upon universal suffrage, with as much protection as possible for the producing classes. This first victory gained, the working-class will be in a position to carry the revolutionary struggle farther towards the attainment of Labour Swaraj, which will then have become a realizable goal.

Upon our ability to formulate these cardinal points in our Programme, on its political side, will depend the possibility of establishing a working-alliance between our Party of the Workers and Peasants, and the parties of bourgeois nationalism. This alliance should be sought during the anti-imperialist struggle. What revolutionary significance the nationalist bourgeoisie possess, can be brought to bear fully upon the situation only under the pressure of a revolutionary mass-party. This pressure will be effectively felt when the Party of Workers and Peasants makes use of every available opportunity for striking an agreement with the Indian bourgeoisie in the common struggle against Imperialism.

Our party must not only lead the working-classes in their everyday struggle for existence, but should also formulate the demands which correspond to the permanent interests of the toiling masses. Such demands will open up a new vision before the working-class, which will thus develop the will to fight.

Yours for the speedy organization of the Workers and Peasants Party of India, - the Vanguard of the struggle for social, economic and political emancipation.

July 15, 1923.

ON THE DUTY OF REVOLUTIONARY INTELLECTUALS

Dear Friends

Despite the abhorrence to all things revolutionary which the Non-cooperation Movement displayed, your faith in its potentiality was really pathetic. I suppose the apparent powerfulness of the movement prevented you from analysing its composition aid discovering its inherent weaknesses, - weaknesses which however, could not be concealed for long. You were charitable and chose to wait patiently. The philosophy behind this attitude was that of the good old days, - submerge the Individual to the Cause. But before debarring oneself completely from the right of private judgment, it is necessary to know thoroughly the nature, ideals and principles that go into the making of a Cause, as well as the factors, objective and subjective, that conduce towards its attainment. You chose to sacrifice your individual criticism to the cause of Non-cooperation, but what was this cause, after all? What did you sacrifice yourself for?

When more than two years ago, I raised my voice against this hypocrisy of Non-cooperation, and had the courage to utter convictions which though true were not agreeable, this philosophy of selflessness made you look upon me with displeasure. I am ready to grant that, not understanding its inherent defects, it was right on your part to take such an attitude of loyalty towards a movement which held out big possibilities. But even this much cannot be said now. The movement from which you expected so much, is dead. It is not necessary for you to give me the credit of having made a correct estimate. What I do expect is that you should be realists enough to understand that nothing any longer exists to exact from you a loyalty whose

most fatal consequence was complete inertness on your part. The time has come for you to take a definite stand.

The Non-Cooperation Movement is a thing of the past. The Congress is divided into more than two factions. The predominating tendency is towards the right, that is, towards resumption of the old constitutional methods which, by the way, will prove much more powerful in the next stages of our movement than the utter confusion which reigned in the latter days of Non-cooperation. But constitutional agitation, while impelling the movement forward to a certain degree, is not what is needed for the attainment of freedom. It will merely be a step forward; that is all. The other sections of the Non-cooperation camp are drifting like ships with broken rudders, - there is no programme, no purpose, no leadership. The Government is taking advantage of the present chaos; therefore, it certainly does not behoove the revolutionary elements of our movement to remain passive at this fateful juncture. They must act.

There are two ways ahead; either to join forces with the faction of Constitutional Democracy or to evolve a new leadership, in conformity with the objective needs of the country. The dissensions in the No-Change camp show that the rank and file of the Congress contains a considerable revolutionary element, which is as yet unconscious of its own significance and potentiality. This element is going through a period of disillusionment. At every step, it is being betrayed by leaders in whom its members placed such faith. Now is the most suitable moment for those conscious revolutionaries, who constitute the vanguard of the Army of Freedom, to assert themselves and to place themselves at the head of these disorganized and scattered forces. When I am asked: "What should be done?", I reply: "There is an army without command; put yourselves at its head".

The real question is: How can this be done? What we have been doing, speaking and writing for these past two years (and which has made me incur your displeasure), is to supply an answer to this question, which it was certain, must eventually

arise. Now to recapitulate the practical aspects of our proposed solution. There must be a new party. Not the old secret organizations without any political outlook, but an open mass organization with a socio-economic programme. You are perhaps not unaware that the organization of such a party has been started all over the country, and the Government is the first to understand the significance of such a thing; therefore it comes down upon this embryonic party with the heavy hand of repression. The cry of "Bolshevism" is raised, and the majority of the nationalists are alarmed by this cry. But the more alarmed they become, the more will the hand of the government be strengthened. If the comfortable position of Imperialism is to be threatened, a revolutionary mass party must come into being, and a mass party cannot be organized in India - without a programme which places the economic needs of the workers and peasants in the forefront.

Call it Bolshevism if you choose. In that case, let me be brutally frank and tell you openly that the salvation of India lies through Bolshevism. But we need not be such sensationalists. Bolshevism is a long way off from India. We will have to go through many other "isms" before we come to that stage. Every inch of ground in these intervening stages has also to be fought for. The experience of the past three years must have convinced those with an open mind that the nation is composed of two elements, - one that can make a terrible noise but which will not fight; the other that appears to be dumb, ignorant, undisciplined, and all the rest of it, but which is ready and capable of fighting. The first has so far been holding the center of the stage; the time has now come for the latter.

Only class-interests and class-prejudice can prevent one from recognizing this outstanding feature of the national struggle today. Our de-classed intellectuals cannot have any class-interest, since they have long since been divested of any property-rights and titles; hence their revolutionary tendency. The political and economic development of the native bourgeoisie, not at the

expense of, but in conjunction with Imperialism, will not solve the problem that faces the lower middle-class intellectuals, - the problem of how to survive in the daily struggle for existence. There remains however, a hereditary and lingering class-prejudice, on the part of these lower middle-class intellectuals, which allies them psychologically with the propertied classes, and prevents them from recognizing clearly the truth of their own status, - that of intellectual proletarians, whose proper and only place is by the side of the expropriated masses.

However, the distance to travel from economic declassification to psychological declassification is a very short one. The alarm raised by the growing unemployment among our lower middle-class, proves that is it not at all impossible for true revolutionaries to travel this short distance. One has only to be a little less sentimental and a little more realistic, and the journey is half accomplished. Leaving aside for a moment the question of the welfare of the toiling masses, we may ask: What benefit will accrue to the class we all belong to, - the lower middle-class, - if any of the existing political programmes now put forward are realized, be it the programme of the Moderates, be it of the Responsive Cooperators (now called Swarajists), or be it of the orthodox Non-Cooperators, if such an ilk still exists? Nationalism is no moon-shine; there is always some material interest behind the species of nationalism put forward by the various classes into which the people are divided.

You will accuse me of vulgar materialism. Well, all I ask you is: How is your programme of Cultural Nationalism going to be realized when the very brain of our tribe is being dried up by malnutrition and disease? Just think of living on thirty rupees a month, and even that princely standard is vanishing every day! Can you still expect a clerk with a family to support on thirty rupees a month, with the cost of living rising every day, to dream of the cultural nationalism of Vivekenanda or of Arabinda (which is nothing but spiritual imperialism); much less, how can you expect him to fight for it? There is no such

thing as "defensive nationalism", as C.R. Das preaches. It is stupidity or sheer hypocrisy to say that our nationalism will be different from European nationalism. Nationalism is always aggressive, directly or indirectly. The history of the national development of every country proves this fact conclusively. The ultimate goal of Indian nationalism is to conquer the world, - it may be by "non-violent and peaceful means". But is it not ridiculous to aspire world domination, even a cultural or "spiritual" one, when we are not. capable of securing a full meal a day for ourselves and our families? The talk of "cultural nationalism", of "spiritual nationalism" is all camouflage. The upper and middle classes, (the bourgeoisie') whose members wish to convert the national freedom into freedom for themselves to exploit the rest of the nation, - our propertied classes use the theories of India's "cultural mission", "spiritual mission" and all the rest of such tommyrot, only to fool the lower middle-class, which has every reason on earth to be revolutionary, and to place itself at the head of a mass movement aimed to secure real freedom for the majority of the Indian people.

The collapse of the Non-cooperation Movement and the gradual but unmistakable revelation of the true colours of the Swaraj Party are putting the lower middle-class into a susceptible frame of mind. They will soon be amenable to reason. The ravings of the "Servant" will not be able to drug them very much longer. The time has come to give them a new leadership, - to point out a new way. But by themselves, the lower middle-class is utterly incapable of doing anything. Its members must either be the miserable and deluded followers of the bourgeoisie, or divesting themselves of all class-prejudice, they must throw in their lot once and for all with the workers and peasants. In the latter case, they will have the chance of playing a political role, if they are courageous.

Therefore, my proposition is that you should shake off your passive attitude and appear in the political field, not as an appendage to some worn-out faction, but as an independent

force with a new vision, with a new programme. If such a step is not taken, a deplorable situation will result. Despair will drive the revolutionary middle-class intellectuals to resume the futile tactics of individual terrorism, which will be fatal, and will kill the possibility of a legal political mass party for a long time to come. Such a tendency is already being manifested in the Punjab. The sabotage of the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee ruined the Akali movement. What few consciously revolutionary leaders there were, were taken away by the government. The rank and file were thrown into confusion and despair. The result has been the rise of the Baber Akalis, - a victory of the Gadhr cult of revolutionary terrorism.

The days are gone in which insurrectionary movements prove helpful to great political struggles, whose progress is obstructed by the savage repression which immediately follows such an outbreak of premature violence. If we are not careful, there will be a recrudescence of the terrorist movement all over the country, the stamping out of which will mean an era of martial law and an end to whatever few constitutional rights we possess of press, speech and assembly. What is now needed is not individual terrorism, but the organization of a vast, all-India political party of the workers and peasants, upon a programme of economic and social emancipation broad enough to include the expropriated lower middle-class, and to draw within its folds all the truly revolutionary elements in the country, who will find in such a party not merely something corresponding to their own interests, but a scope for practical and constructive political activity as well.

About the programme, tactics and methods of the organization of such a party, I have written exhaustively. In short, we must provide some outlet for the energies of those impatient youths who have been waiting three years for the declaration of Civil Disobedience, and who have waited so long in vain. Such an outlet can be found in organization and propaganda activities, - in work which will bring the masses

consciously within the fold of the new movement. Such activities will awaken the class-interest of the workers, by explaining to them their economic condition and pointing the way out of it. It is necessary not only to show them the goal, but to be with them in their struggle for their everyday needs, and thus win their confidence.

Gandhi shed crocodile tears for the masses; Das has talked volubly about the necessity for organizing the workers, but neither has done anything practical in this direction, nor has either of them meant to do so, in the direction which has been outlined by us.

Let us do the work which they and others have left undone. We can prove ourselves different from the rest only when we recognise the fact that our relation with the working-class is neither one of humanitarianism, nor of political exigency, but that it is an organic relation of common interests. The interest of our class is irrevocable interlinked with that of the working-class. First of all we must be conscious of this fundamental truth and work honestly according to this conviction; then the rest will be clear.

If our propaganda helps to create an understanding of the Indian situation as viewed in the light of historic materialism; if it tends to awaken the class-consciousness of the oppressed and exploited majority; if it carries conviction to the questioning minds of these Indian revolutionaries who are at present groping in the dark, and sets their feet on the only path that can lead to the real freedom of our country and people, - then our work has not been in vain. We call upon all those who are honestly convinced that the road to freedom lies this way, to throw themselves into the great work of organizing a mass-party of the Indian workers and peasants upon a programme of economic and social emancipation, and under the slogan a "Not the Masses for Revolution, but Revolution for the Masses"

August 15, 1923.

BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM

We are told by a friend that our critique of bourgeois nationalism is resented by many a sincere revolutionary nationalist because the latter think that this criticism reflects upon their honesty. Let it be said at the very beginning that our revolutionary duty does not permit us to spare the feelings of any particular body which directly or indirectly acts contrary to the interests of the Indian masses. We believe that the revolutionary nationalists, who are inspired by the noble ideal of national liberation, and who during the last two decades have amply proved their readiness to suffer for this ideal, are also with us in the desire to protect the interests of and secure happiness and prosperity for the masses. Correctly understood, our criticism, therefore, should not offend these honest idealists; on the contrary, the object of this criticism has always been to point out, above all to them, the motive behind the apparently plausible acts of the upper classes.

It seems that the misunderstanding arises from the term bourgeoisie. The correct socio-economic definition of this term is evidently not asked for. It is looked upon as a purely western commodity which has no place in India. In short, this term awakens in the average Indian a good deal of prejudice, which is kept alive by the subtle propaganda of the upper classes. Instead of looking for the class in our society which corresponds to what is called the bourgeoisie in the West, the common term `bhadralok' is taken for the synonym. Hence arises the misunderstanding. Of course, the term 'bhadralok' also is essentially applicable to the upper classes; and in that sense it does correspond to the 'bourgeoisie' of the West. But the term `bhadralok' now embraces such a variety of social elements that it is incorrect to use it as the synonym for the word 'bourgeoisie', which has a very definite significance.

The term `bhadralok' literally means a cultured person, - something like the English 'gentleman'. Certainly it has an indirect economic basis, inasmuch as culture has been so far available

only to people enjoying certain economic privileges. The Indian term, however, is not so clearly economic as is 'bourgeoisie'. The latter is a French word which was originally applied to the propertied townsmen, and carried with it all the power and privileges that were the monopoly of the propertied townsmen in the eighteenth century. Therefore, although essentially there is not much difference between the significance of the two terms, commonly not exactly the same thing is understood by them in the places they are respectively used.

The objection to the term 'bourgeoisie' and particularly the criticism levelled against the philosophy and politics of this class, is based upon this difference between the superficial meaning of the two terms. It is perhaps thought that the Indian upper classes do not care for material things; their superiority is cultural, they are intellectual aristocrats. This is precisely the doctrine whose hypocrisy we mean to expose. It is useless to quarrel over terms. It matters very little whether the term `bhadralok' exactly means the 'bourgeoisie' or not. What does matter is that there is a class in India which for all intents and purposes does occupy the same place in Indian society as the bourgeoisie does in the western countries. All the elements included in the general term `bhadralok' may not and in fact do not belong completely to this class. It is also true that the relation between this particular section of the 'bhadralok' and the masses is not the same as the relation between the masses and others who are also called `bhadralok'.

Still more the relation between this particular section of the 'bhadralok' (the section which precisely corresponds to the bourgeoisie) and the other sections which are also called 'bhadralok' is hardly to be distinguished from the relation subsisting between the former and masses. So what is to be noticed is not the loose use of a particular term, a use which has to be made for clarity and in the absence of any more suitable term - but the social composition of the class referred to by this term. If this is done, our friends, the nationalist revolutionaries

will not have any reason to be offended by our criticism of bourgeois philosophy and politics.

They are offended because they think that our criticism is against them; and since they do not possess the attributes which are the object of our criticism, it is quite logical that they should resent our attitude. In fact, what we persistently point out is how the class, from which the revolutionary nationalists hail, do not enjoy any of the rights and privileges that are supposed to belong to a 'bhadralok', and how the intellectual assets they are so proud of, are nothing but a commodity which is to be sold at the doors of the property-owning upper classes in return for an insufficient means of livelihood. Therefore, our criticism ought to help the revolutionary nationalists see things as they are, instead of wounding their pride.

The reason for this resentment on the part of the revolutionaries, if really resentment is there, is that they consider themselves members of the class which we call the bourgeoisie. Now, in the light of the noble sentiments which move these nationalists, it is not possible to count them among those whose patriotism is manifestly that of property, and whose theory of nationalism, as we will show presently, does not correspond with the welfare of the majority of the people who constitute the nation. We say, at the risk of incurring their displeasure in the beginning, to those who must eventually be with us: 'Do not be so proud of your "bhadralok" descent, look at your real position closely with a realist's eye and you will see that you do not belong to the bourgeoisie, the present-day "bhadralok" that counts'.

In scientific social language, we say to the revolutionary patriots who want the freedom, not of a certain section, but of the masses of the Indian people: `You are de-classed: economically you have no place in the ranks of the bourgeoisie - you belong to the exploited working class; it is only the prejudice of birth, of tradition that does not allow you to have this realistic view of your position; materially you are an exploited worker pure

and simple; spiritually you are bound hand and foot by the subtle propaganda of the upper classes, who are very much interested in keeping alive your prejudice against the 'illiterate mob', so that the union of intellectual worker and manual worker will be delayed as much as possible. Such being the case, why should the class, which does not enjoy any of the rights and privileges that go with property, be active or passive supporters of the politics of bourgeois nationalism?' The revolutionary patriots have nothing but their prejudice to lose. If they can do it, they will appreciate our critique of the bourgeoisie, and will see that this critique does not in the least reflect upon their honesty.

Do we not remember the sentiments that, two decades ago. brought nationalism out of the narrow circle of those engaged in prosperous liberal professions or occupying comfortable government posts? What was the ideal of those pioneers of new nationalism who challenged the right of the then Congress to speak in the name of the nation? The sentiment was of rebellion against the miserable condition to which the masses had been reduced by the foreign ruler. The ideal was to feed the hungry, to enlighten the illiterate. Not the English High Priests of Constitutionalism, but some native rebel or other, for example Bankim Chatterji, was the inspiring genius. The sight of a hungry, ignorant, oppressed people was the moving force.

Therefore, the story of the Ananda Math fired the imagination of our revolutionary patriots. The cry was, rob the rich to feed the poor. In another part of the country, the vision of Sivaji leading his mountaineers fired the popular imagination. This is the basis of revolutionary nationalism, which concerns itself with the fate of the broad masses of the people. So far none of the political parties, that have at one time or other appropriated the title of fighting for the national interest, have stood upon this basis. The reason for this deviation has been insistently pointed out by us. It has not been an involuntary deviation. Exigencies of class interest demanded it. And here comes the difference

between bourgeois nationalism calculated to further the interests of the upper (and specially capitalist) classes, and revolutionary patriotism based upon the noble ideal of securing happiness and prosperity for the majority of the people.

When the bourgeoisie, actuated by the desire to advance its own class interest, betrays the cause of honest patriotism, it certainly becomes imperative that every sincere patriot gets over the prejudice of being a bhadralok and takes his stand on the road of a clear revolutionary fight, which will lead to the realization of the ideal that burns in him. Failing to do so, he naturally identifies himself with the bourgeoisie, and therefore deserves to be called a hypocrite.

Now let us see what way the various schools of bourgeois nationalism are following, in order to judge if that way conforms to the ideal of sincere patriotism. In a recent article called the 'Bolshevik Menace', the Bengalee holds up our programme as positively harmful to the interests of the nation. After quoting the particular clause which calls for giving the land to the tiller, this organ of the merchant princes and landed barons writes:

`It therefore, behooves all owners of property and wealth, all professional men, all sane and sober patriots, all apostles of education and culture to combine and guard against this incipient danger which threatens to sap the very foundation of the social structure, and paralyse the activities of a young and rising nation'.

The entire article is full of such choice sentiments which can be found expressed abundantly in the press of the big bourgeoisie. Any programme that proposes to curtail in the least the vested interest of the upper classes is condemned in the name of the nation, and the patriotism of the nationalist lower middle classes is invoked to rush to the defence of the rights of property against the exploited and expropriated masses. Does not the idea of honest patriotism warrant an unconditional denunciation of this brand of nationalism? Are we wrong in calling upon the revolutionary nationalists to sever all connection with these patriots of property, and to forget their illusion of intellectual

superiority, an illusion which only renders them the involuntary defenders of this brand of nationalism?

One more instance. The Swaraj Party is headed by men whose patriotism is supposed to be above suspicion. Here again, it is not individual idealism but class interest that rules supreme; and the situation has to be met as a class. The Swaraj Party proposes to enter the Councils and put forth a demand for 'real self-government' on behalf of the nation. In order to do it, they must have the mandate of the electorate, which is hardly one half per cent of the population. And who constitutes this electorate? Overwhelmingly, the propertied upper classes.

Therefore, it is quite conceivable what will be the nature of the 'real self-government' demanded by the Swaraj Party. Here is what the Tribune (an organ of the Swaraj Party) says: 'by compelling the government to become really constitutional, in other words, to accept the people, that is the electorate, as its only true master'. This is the political philosophy of the party in a nut-shell. The interests of the electorate, that is the infinitesimal minority, are taken for national interests, and so soon as the government takes these interests into consideration it will become really constitutional. Upon this achievement of national self-government, the representatives of this minority will rule over the country in the name of national welfare and democracy!

Is it not a monstrous lie to say that any one of the above parties or some other of similar nature can receive the loyal adhesion of those who honestly desire the welfare of the masses? Is it not a deplorable mistake for the revolutionary patriots to consider themselves allied in any way with the classes that deceive the nation for their own interests? This is what we mean by the nationalism of the bourgeoisie.

GOOD CRITICISM BUT BAD PROGRAMME

The Socialist criticizes the manifesto of the projected Workers' and Peasants' Party of India. The manifesto certainly contains

many points which call for criticism of much severer nature than that ventured by the Socialist. It is a very confused document, full of undigested ideas of the labour movement, sloppy sentimentality and clauses which are positively pernicious. The authors obviously lack the understanding of the task they have set themselves to do. Among the innumerable contradictions and incongruities contained in that manifesto, the Socialist picks up only two points to criticize. They are concerning the aim of the proposed party, and private property. 'Achievement of Labour Swaraj' is certainly a vague programme so long as 'Labour Swaraj' is left undefined. We have had so many brands and interpretations of Swaraj during the last three years that one more variety does not make much difference, nor does it dissipate the confusion into which the people have been thrown.

The Socialist points out this ambiguity, and suggests that the object of the projected party should be not a 'class-Swaraj' but a 'classless Swaraj'. So far so good; but the criticism should be more penetrating if the ideological confusion of the authors of the manifesto is to be cleared, in order that the party may be born under proper auspices. The term 'Labour Swaraj' does not necessarily mean the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the Socialist appears to assume. It is hard to say what is in the mind of those who wrote the manifesto; but a perusal of the document certainly does not permit such a conclusion. The pretence of a programme formulated in the manifesto certainly does not tend towards any dictatorship.

On the other hand, 'Labour Swaraj' may mean the 'classless Swaraj' which the Socialist suggests because, when the class living on unearned income is eliminated, the society will be so composed that every member will have to contribute a certain amount of labour for its upkeep. But the 'Labour Swaraj' of the manifesto means neither one nor the other. It is just an empty phrase, coined by people perhaps with good intentions, but certainly without any understanding of the term. Had it not been so, the manifesto would deal with more immediate political

questions, without solving which, 'Labour Swaraj', neither of one sort nor of the other, can be attained. However, the Socialist certainly justifies its name by frowning upon such childish phrases, although it fails to go as far as it should have gone.

Then, the question of private property is not the only question which has not been touched in the manifesto. The Socialist could point out omissions of much more vital significance. Coupled with 'Labour Swaraj',' the question of private property, of course, stands out as the most glaring of such omissions because it is simply ridiculous to talk of 'Labour Swaraj', be it dictatorship of the proletariat or be it a communist society, without committing oneself to the total abolition of private property.

Lack of clarity on such a vital question will not only 'create dissension in its ranks', as the Socialist warns, but will make the very existence of a working class party impossible. In its earlier stages, the working class party may find it necessary to put forward a minimum programme, which leaves out questions of fundamental social readjustment. It goes without saying that the workers and peasants of India, under the present circumstances, must be organized with slogans corresponding to their most immediate necessities. Therefore, such questions as the abolition of private property, communal reconstruction of social economy etc. need not be included in the minimum programme. Why, then, talk of such far-off things as 'labour Swaraj'? It does not come within the purview of immediate necessities. It is certainly out of the realm of practical politics. But the outstanding feature of the manifesto is the lack of all sense of proportion. We have already fully expressed our views on the manifesto and the so-called programme of the projected Workers' and Peasants' Party (The Vanguard, 1 August). Here a reference to the criticism of the Socialist is only intended.

The commendable criticism of the Socialist, however, is followed by a bad programme. The prospects of a working class party in India would not be brighter if the programme set forth in the manifesto is rejected in favour of the suggestions made by the Socialist. If the one is ambiguous and childish, the other is incoherent and mechanical.

There is no system in the programme suggested by the Socialist. In it the far-off ideal is mixed up with what is supposed to be the 'tactics' or the methods of immediate fight. Much more attention is given to the building up of the 'classless Swaraj' (which, according to the Socialist, should be the aim of the party) than to immediate political problems and economic necessities. The economics of the Socialist is rather shaky. For example, it goes merrily on to the pleasant task of setting up nice little village units, which are to be inhabited by free cultivators, without bothering itself with the thorny question of landlordism, which reigns supreme in India. The Labour-Peasants Party Manifesto advocates a 'Labour Swaraj' (whatever that might be), without defining its attitude about private property; the programme advanced by the Socialist proposes a re-grouping of the village, without saying a word as to what should happen to those who own the land today. It is difficult to choose one from the other.

The Programme proposed by the Socialist calls for a 'classless Swaraj' which, according to the definition given, is something like a socialist commonwealth. It is certainly a far-fetched programme just at this moment. There are much nearer goals to attain. It is no use being utopians or absolutists. A more immediate and more workable political programme is necessary. It is a long jump from mediaeval feudal-patriarchy to a socialist commonwealth. There is danger of breaking one's neck or being laughed at. Socialism, at least a correct understanding of it, does not overlook the various stages of political existence through which a given community must pass before socialized production, distribution and exchange are reached. The Indian masses will still have to go through not a few of these economic and political stages.

A normal march along this line of social evolution has been obstructed by Imperialism; therefore, the first and foremost task is the overthrow of the latter. National liberation is no less

necessary for the ultimate freedom of the working class than for the immediate aggrandizement of the native bourgeoisie. It is idle to talk about the socialization of the means of production while this still remains in an almost primitive stage. Neither a handloom nor a piece of land held by the greed of a small peasant can be socialized by dint of a programme. In India we still live in the age of the handloom and of primitive agriculture. Is it not premature to talk of the socialization of the means of production? The production itself is yet far from being socialized. Therefore, we need not fix our gaze so high up in the air. A political institution, which is necessary for carrying our people through the intervening stages of economic development, should be our immediate goal. To lead the working class for the conquest of that goal is our task.

The Socialist naturally (because it is socialist) won't have private property. It proposes nationalization of public utilities, key-industries and 'housing land'. But then comes the fatal slip and the whole programme becomes mere words. 'The owners of socialized property will be maintained .by the State by way of compensation'. How is the State going to get the money for this purpose? By selling the 'confiscated' (?) properties or by taxation? The first will mean simply a change of hand and the second embarrassment of riches for the worker. The entire value of the socialized properry cannot be covered by taxation at once. It has to be spread over a certain period, and for this period the State will be the debtor to the expropriated (?) class.

The conclusion of this situation is not difficult to make: a circle will be described - the state-power will revert ere long to those who hold the purse-string. The vision of classless Swaraj will vanish in the thin air. Too academic and too puritanical understanding of socialism leads us to such a vicious circle. Socialism tempered by realism, or in other words, ability to apply Marxian dialectics to the Indian situation is what is needed. The programme suggested by the Socialist lacks this ability no less conspicuously than the confused manifesto.

The economic structure of the village units, which, according to the Socialist, should be the cornerstone of the new society, is too mechanical to be applied on a large scale. Besides, the meaning of that particular clause is far from clear. As soon as something concrete is approached, a serious contradiction is revealed. For instance, in the 'classless Swaraj', the 'hiring of labour will be permitted'. What does it mean? The wage-system is not to be abolished. And the inevitable outcome of a situation where wages are paid and taken, is the development of classes with conflicting interests.

Furthermore, 'any ryot unable to run his quota may hire himself out, lease his holding or share it with another'. Such an arrangement will inevitably lead to the accumulation of land in the hands of a few, and it will not be very long before we come back to the same point from where we started the journey towards the 'classless Swaraj', which can never be reached through such a mechanical and perfunctory programme.

So, on the question of landownership, which is the most vital economic problem in contemporary India, the programme misses fire altogether.

Although in a previous clause private property is allowed except in the public utilities and some vital industries, in another place it is stipulated that 'private trading will be absolutely forbidden in foodstuffs etc'. This is another of the contradictions that result not from simple oversight, but from the slipshod manner in which is drafted a programme for the building of such a far-off ideal as a 'classless Swaraj'. Better results could be expected if the Socialist would apply itself to problems which affect the Indian working class more immediately.

Such topics as tactics, direct action, propaganda, strike, boycott and general strike are dealt with. Not only the definitions of these terms given are not always correct, but nothing at all is said as to what should be the tactics of an Indian working class party at this period of political subjugation, economic backwardness and social stagnation.

In short, the programme is very defective theoretically. If it is meant to be the maximum programme of a Socialist Party, it falls very short of the mark. Nor is it the minimum programme for the building of a working class party. No attempt has been made to formulate the demands which will correspond to the every-day necessities of the worker and peasant. The vague ideals and perfunctory economic proposals contained in it do not make the programme any more understandable for the masses than the programme of the bourgeois parties. The profound theoretical difference between spiritual Swaraj and classless Swaraj is certainly beyond the intellectual ken of the average Indian peasant or worker. It is not enough to say what will happen when the general strike takes place: what is more important is to formulate a programme of action which will develop the movement in such a way that the possibilities of a general strike will be nearer every day. But the Socialist has nothing to suggest in this respect. Its programme confines itself, on the one hand, to a mechanical scheme of a new social order and, on the other, to some incorrect definitions.

M. N. Roy

ON NON-VIOLENCE AND THE MASSES

My dear Comrade…

I cannot pass over the question of Non-violence without making a few remarks. It is an important question, so even at the risk of taxing your patience, I persist in a mutual understanding of it. First of all, you are wrong in classifying us among those romantic revolutionaries who preach violence without having the slightest notion of the gravity involved in the question. We are not enamoured with the idea of violence as an idea. We are not militarists. But we are realists. That is all. We have never preached the use of indiscriminate violence. What we have done, still do and will always do is to oppose the cult of Non-violence, which is a dangerous cult, and must be exposed in its true sinister significance. You need not remind us

that there cannot be an armed revolution in a country in which the people are completely disarmed. Everyone who does not have the illusion that the Motherland can be freed by bombs and pistols, understands this hopeless plight of the country and appreciates the gravity of the situation. But there is a great difference between not preaching violence and preaching non-violence with a vengeance. If the idea behind the latter is to keep clear of the Penal Code, then the whole thing becomes miserably static. You cannot conform the Programme of a political party to the vagaries of the Penal Code. This has never been done anywhere in the world. And it will not be otherwise in India.

For example, shall the new party have a clear political programme? "Labour Swaraj" is not any more comprehensible than the Mahatma's Swaraj, which was a "mental state". Every political party in India must define its attitude vis à vis Imperialism. We have to declare what the political character of this "Labour Swaraj" will be. Will it be Dominion Status, or does it require separation from all Imperial connection? These are not sentimental questions. Hard facts of economics are involved in them. "Labour Swaraj" cannot be won, the "economic relief of the masses" cannot be secured, so long as the political life of India is not freed from Imperialist domination, which protects the monopoly of British capital. So if we are sincere in our profession of "Labour Swaraj", we will be forced to demand a political status, the fight over which will mock at all our silly talk about Non-violence.

Let me remind you again that we do not preach violence out of any love for it. We are not more bloodthirsty than Maharaj Budha, or the Mahatmaji. But we are realists enough to see that the economic condition of the masses cannot be in any way improved unless first of all, the monopoly of Imperialist capital is broken. What does this lead to? It means that a party of Workers and Peasants must necessarily fight for complete national freedom and the establishment of a Republic. As soon as a party commits itself to this first principle of politics, it

logically launches itself on a career which will inevitably bring it into conflict with the Penal Code and to frequent encounters with the wily custodians thereof. Thus, the simple use of the term "non-violence" cannot save us from the clutches of the I.P.C. unless this magic term eventually damns our whole programme and makes of us despicable hypocrites.

There is another aspect of the question. To define clearly that our political programme calls for the complete separation from all imperial connection and the establishment of a national republican government does not by any means lead to the committing of futile acts of terrorism, or even to an immediate armed revolt. It is quite a constitutional position which can be taken without the least violation of the tactics of Non-violence. In Great Britain, one can freely give vent to this political principle, and the "Independence Party" of Hazrat Mohani has taken up the same position, under the protection of the constitutional safeguards of bourgeois democracy. Further, where do you find any preaching of violence in our Action Programme? Our tactics can be summarized in the phrase, - "Mass-action". No party of workers and peasants can be built without subscribing to these tactics. We do not preach insurrection, nor do we incite to bloodshed, so we are innocent as far as legal technicalities are concerned.

But Imperialism does not follow such a sterile statical course. Even the poor Mahatma could not keep out of jail, although he made a veritable fetich of non-violence, and sacrificed a great revolutionary movement on the altar of his own ideosyncracies, which socially speaking, are of a very sinister kind. It is not legal or technical violence that the ruling-class is apprehensive about. Such outgrowths can be dealt with rather easily. The suppression of the terrorist societies of Bengal and the Punjab and of the attempted insurrection in the beginning of the war are examples. The government dread more than anything else the least signs of social violence, manifested through any political movement of the masses.

Therefore, any party which will reflect the needs, desires, and spirit of the masses, cannot be considered peaceful in so far as the ruling class is concerned. You cannot fool the Government by shouting from the housetops the refrain: "We are a Party of Non-violent Revolutionaries." As soon as a party is formed with the object and determination to conquer freedom for the toiling masses, the wrath of the government, as well as of our own propertied classes, will be invoked. The mere use of the phrase "Non-violence" cannot avert this eventuality.

My suggestion is to drop the term Non-violence from our programme, but to be careful that no attempt at premature action is made; on the other hand, we shall not preach violence as such. We shall simply state our political demands, economic programme and social ideals, and formulate in clear language the method of fight by which we propose to realize this programme, - that is, by the widespread and militant use of direct action by the working masses.

I cannot share your pessimism about the spirit of the masses. The events of the last several years, and those which are taking place even in these days of depression, do not permit me to realize that it will take one or two generations before we can rouse the masses to organize. The fault is not with the masses, but with the so-called leaders. Then, if it is true that the masses are as apathetic as you picture, why talk of a party of the workers and peasants? We must sacrifice a bit of our cherished subjectivism before we can take a healthy view of the situation. You will excuse me if I point out some flaws in your generally admirable spirit. Unconsciously, by not approaching the problem from quite the right angle, you are already limiting the scope of the party. You would give the first place to the "relief of economic conditions." Here you undertake something impossible.

How can you relieve the economic condition of the masses without first removing the causes of this economic condition? Our programme, no doubt, calls for the socio-economic freedom of the producing classes. But to say that we must first of all work

for a generation to improve the economic condition of the workers, is putting the cart before the horse. Not the goal itself, but the striving for the goal must precede its actual attainment. Economic and social emancipation can only follow upon a complete change in the present political order. It is a mistake to imagine that the toiling masses will organize themselves and will take part in the political movement only when, after a generation or two, their economic condition is relieved.

This is the theory of Reformism, as exemplified, in the economic organization of the British working-class, whose participation in politics is a comparatively recent affair. By narrowing the primary aim of our party to the economic relief of the masses, you necessarily limit the scope of activity to reformist Trade Unionism and rural cooperative movements. This originally, is not what you aim at. Our task which demands the organization of a working-class party altogether free from upper-class meddling, is to organize and lead the toiling masses in the fight which will conquer step by step, the freedom of their class and eventually of the whole society. Therefore, let us clarify our views by such a formulation of the question:

"Our object is the economic freedom of the producing classes; this ultimate goal will be attained after a long and bitter struggle; therefore, our primary task is to organize the masses and lead them in the struggle for economic freedom."

Looked at from this point of view, the whole scheme of organization, tactics, plan of action etc. assumes a changed aspect. Yes, we must fight, struggle, be ready for defeats and disappointments, but once we have consciously set our feet on the right road, with a clear vision of the task ahead, nothing can daunt us and all causes for pessimism disappear.

November 10, 1923

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL LETTERS

The adjoined letters were written on various occasions during the last year and a half. Practically all the burning questions of

the day are discussed in them. Some of them have already been published on separate occasions. But all of them taken together make a complete whole, which is of use for an understanding of the ideological aspect of the Indian Nationalist Movement. Although originally the letters were written to individuals, by way of polemics on different social, economic or political topics, they are by no means private correspondence. The individuals to whom they were addressed, are active in one sphere or another of the great movement which is shaking the very foundation of our country. The object of these letters was in some cases to point out the mistakes of the persons to whom they were addressed, in others to criticise some particular school of socio-political thought, in others again to indicate the broad outlines of our programme and tactics. Therefore, it is clear that the contents of the letters were meant to be communicated to more than those to whom they were written. Thanks to the censorship in general, and in some cases owing to the reluctance of the recipients, the letters failed to reach as wide a circle of readers as they were meant for. It is believed that their publication in collectivity will serve a useful purpose.

These letters will once more prove the potency of a certain method of reading history: to learn from the past, to judge the present and to foresee the future. It will be seen that the criticism made in them has been generally borne out by subsequent developments. It will also be seen that the forecasts made were made with a correct perspective on the situation. It will further be noticed that nothing has happened to challenge successfully the allegations made against the political leadership and social tendencies of the Nationalist Movement.

Written in a rather light conversational style, the letters nevertheless, deal with profound questions of a social, political and economic nature. This method of exposing our views will prove that Historic Materialism, Marxism and Socialism are not such theoretical monstrosities as they are deemed by many of our intellectual wiseacres who do not hesitate to pass opinions

on subjects without knowing anything about them. Practically all of the letters were addressed to those Nationalists who never had much in common with the leadership of the Congress or the neo-constitutionalist Swaraj Party. These elements, who are objectively bound to tread a revolutionary path, if they seriously mean to work out their salvation, are however, caught in such a labyrinth of intellectual confusion that it is almost impossible for them to cut a way out for themselves.

The cause of this lamentable intellectual confusion is the reprehensible social prejudice in which they are steeped. This prejudice and the resulting confusion, taken together, prevent a clear understanding of the economic situation which determines, in the last analysis, all political tendencies. Freed from this bondage, these elements hailing from a semi-proletarianized lower middle. class, can play an important role in the struggle for national liberation. But this much needed freedom depends upon a correct perspective of history. This involves the question of a revolutionary social philosophy. In these letters, attempts have been made to expound the first principles of this philosophy in a language which cannot be suspected of theoretical pedantry.

Curiously enough, the lower middle class intellectuals, who cling to their social prejudice by virtue of a supposed intellectual superiority, sneer at theories when these happen to be advanced by others, and particularly by those not accepting the current theory of Indian Nationalism. In such case these lower middle class intellectuals become advocates of "action", by which term however, they themselves do not know what is meant. They exclaim: "we do not want theory, we want action"! What is implied by this is that they do not care for any new theory. They are satisfied with their own which they do not even want or do not dare to analyse in the light of science and reason. This pathetic faithfulness to the inherited orthodox social theory leads inevitably to intellectual confusion, and the very notion of intellectual superiority of which they are so proud, precludes

all possibility of any action in the broad sense of the word. Hence, it is remarkable that no new contribution to, the political thought of our country has ever been made by the lower middle class, notwithstanding the fact that an overwhelming majority of the martyrs to the cause have risen out of its ranks.

This proves that material reasons have generated a store of revolutionary energy in the organism of this class. This energy, however, cannot assert itself profitably, simply because no suitable expression has been so far found for it. It is only the philosophy of Historic Materialism and the programme of Marxism, Socialism, that can show the way out. But the reactionary tendencies are so strong in the ranks of the lower middle class that to them the very names of Materialism and Marxism are abhorrent. To run away from this only light that can illuminate before them the road to salvation, they seek refuge in the ridiculous theory of Spiritual Imperialism: that Indian society is essentially spiritual, that Indian culture does not admit of sordid materialism, and that the spiritual mission of India will ultimately save humanity. To demolish these ridiculous theories is a task which is indispensably necessary for the progress of the Indian people, and even for the development of the present political struggle.

On such a hollow foundation, no solid edifice of a political movement can be built. But immediately a way has to be found for mobilizing the revolutionary energy of the youthful members of the lower middle class, to be devoted to some more fruitful purpose than the vegetating campaign of Charka and Khaddar on the one hand, and the futile cult of bomb and revolver on the other. This can be done only by turning their idealistic vision away from sentimental abstractions to the rude realities of life. Instead of frightening them away in the beginning with the names of Socialism and Materialism, it was sought to prove to them that the ideals they cherish cannot be realized by the methods they follow. In doing so, the light of Historic Materialism and the programme of Socialism were presented to them in a

form not altogether unfamiliar to them. This could not be done indeed without adopting a line of criticism and without telling somewhat brutally unpalatable truths, things not very familiar in Indian political language.

A few letters casually scribbled cannot have the pretension of covering the vast theoretical field they touch upon. They were meant to be an intellectual stimulus: to awaken in the readers, if not the desire to make further study of the method outlined therein, at least the intellectual activity required to defend one's theory in the face of rational criticism. Unquestionable acceptance of doctrines and dogmas leads to intellectual stagnation, which is much worse than want of intelligence. Total lack of intelligence admits of the growth of it eventually when a favourable situation is created; but stagnation is a pitiable state. One sleeps with the smug conviction of possessing something which one does not possess in reality. The disturbance of this passive stage is a prerequisite for further growth. The stagnation. sometimes becomes so confirmed that rather rude shocks are needed. Since the contents of the following letters are considered to have the merit of such a disturbing nature, it is thought desirable to publish them together.

Zurich, March 1924.

THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL & THE DOCTRINE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

One of the prices with which Mr. MacDonald bought the rather dubious Liberal support has been the scrapping of the doctrine of self-determination. This doctrine, invented by ex-President Wilson to justify the depredations of one group of imperialists against another group, was taken up by the moribund Second International as an article of faith. Much breath has since been wasted on this doctrine which is, for all practical purposes, nothing but a piece of bourgeois hypocrisy. In the hands of the Social-Democrats, it served the purpose of a very convenient weapon to fight the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Second

International kept on talking of the right of self-determination after the Treaty of Versailles had cynically mocked at the unsuccessful prophet of the doctrine.

It valiantly fought for the Georgian democracy when democracy had become a sham in the very countries of Europe. The British Labourites led by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald took up the case of "oppressed Georgia" with the spirit of the crusaders, although the people subjugated by British imperialism were counted in hundreds of millions. But Mr. MacDonald told us that he believed in the right of self-determination for all nationalities. It was, therefore, natural to infer that, although Mr. MacDonald and his party did not fight against British imperialism with one-hundredth as much vigour as they fought "Bolshevik imperialism," the peoples inhabiting India, Ireland, Egypt and the extensive regions included in the British Empire would be given the right of self-determination when the Labour Party came to office. Of course, among the Communists there has never been much illusion on this score. It was never believed that the doctrine would prove any less to be hypocritical cant in the hand of the reformist Social-Democrats than it did in the hand of the imperialist bourgeoisie. It is a bourgeois doctrine par excellence, and, as such, can never work out in a way which will mean ruin to bourgeois domination.

On many an occasion half-hearted resolutions were passed by the Second International expressing sympathy with the struggle of the opposed people. But never did those resolutions mean anything more serious than an expression of righteous opinion. In short, the Second International never took the question of self-determination seriously. Its vision did not go beyond the narrow limits of the European countries.

It believed in the "civilising mission" of European imperialism. When the carrying out of this mission brought in its train brutalities which could not be overlooked, the Second International squared its conscience by passing a resolution. But it never challenged imperialism as such. Had the resolutions

passed by the Second International during the last twenty years been anything more than a collection of sweet phrases, the colonial policy of the British Labour Party in office would not be what it is. The politics of Mr. MacDonald, as Prime Minister, stand condemned by the utterances of MacDonald, the Socialist. The Second International never meant to approach the question of self-determination from an angle of vision different from that of the bourgeiosie. Therefore, at the first instance that its most influential section came face to face with the problem, the hypocrisy of its position is exposed.

In some quarters, however, the professions of Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues did arouse hope which has now been dashed to the ground by his action.

Mr. MacDonald wrote much about India. Although nowhere in his writings is to be found anything that can be construed as a commitment to the cause of Indian independence, his professions of sympathy and friendship were so profuse that they could not fail to make him rather a popular figure in Indian Nationalist circles. Mr. MacDonald visited India twice. Once as a simple member of Parliament, in 1910, and then three years later as a member of a Royal Commission to examine the possibilities of reforming the Public Services. On both occasions he expressed himself very sympathetically towards Indian aspirations. In fact, his first visit made him so popular in India that as a sop to the popular feelings he was appointed on the Royal Commission. After his first visit he wrote a book called "The Awakening of India," which soon incurred the displeasure of the colonial rulers, and was promptly prohibited entry into India.

When Mr. MacDonald became the Prime Minister, his book was still under the ban. It was a curious situation: the Prime Minister considered to be an enemy of the Empire! This curious situation appealed to the sense of humour of the Indian Nationalists; but Mr. MacDonald himself chose to overlook obviously in the interests of the Empire.

In the newly-elected Indian Legislative Assembly it was asked if the Government was aware of the fact that a book of the Prime Minister was proscribed in India. The Government naturally was placed in a very queer position. It came out of it with the aid of some extremely lame excuse. After some days of delay the government informed the Assembly that there was no such order on record. So, without committing itself and without establishing a precedent in favour of "seditious literature" entering India, the government of India avoided the duty of declaring the Prime Minister an enemy of the Empire. How disastrous would it have been otherwise! All the guarantees given by Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues as to the safety of the Empire in the hands of the Labour Party would have been challenged by this single act!

The Indian Nationalists defended Mr. MacDonald's right to free opinion against the attacks of his own subordinates, even after he had sent his memorable message to India on the eve of his coming to power. Mr. MacDonald wrote that infamous message to insinuate himself into the good graces of the British bourgeoisie. In writing it he not only forgot all his former profession about self-determination, but voluntarily bartered away his Indian admirers. The most significant fact is that that message, which could have been sent by any representative of British Imperialism not excluding Lord Curzon, was not written under the "exigencies" of office, under which the vital planks of the Labour Party in home politics have been rejected, but before Mr. MacDonald became Prime Minister-even before his advent to office was a certainty. In other words, he sent that message when he was engaged in the task of forming the invisible coalition with the Liberals.

The latter demanded that he must make his position as regards India clear. He must prove that there would be no weakness on this point during his regime. It was true that he has not written or said anything that could be construed as against the maintenance of the Empire. But his irresponsible

talks had raised high hopes in India. These hopes should not be encouraged, particularly at the moment when the Nationalists were threatening to create a deadlock in the government by Parliamentary opposition. The imminence of a Labour Government stiffened the attitude of the Nationalists who counted in their ranks not a few personal friends and many an admirer of the would-be premier.

The Liberals point out to Mr. MacDonald that his loose talk about self-determination had been taken too seriously in India and that a halt should be called. If he was ready to sacrifice his Indian admirers, he could count upon the Liberal support. In order to prove that he had not meant anything serious in his previous talks, Mr. MacDonald sent the message to India, as it were, to show that the Labour Party might talk of self-determination in leisure hours, but in the moment of action it could shake the mailed fist in the defence of the Empire just as well as any bourgeois party. Therefore, Mr. MacDonald reminded his Indian friends and admirers that no tampering with imperial hegemony would be tolerated by his government. But what was after all the threatening demand of the Indian Nationalists against which Mr. MacDonald roared so majestically?

It should be remembered that the general elections took place simultaneously in Great Britain and in India. According to the same laws of democracy and constitutional government, which made it possible for Mr. MacDonald at the head of a minority party to form the Cabinet, the Nationalists in India ought to be entrusted with the administration of the country. In fact, they are in a better position. In the Central Legislature the newly-formed Nationalist Party (composed of the Right wing that broke away from the National Congress and the Left wing of the Liberal bourgeoisie) possesses a clear majority by virtue of which it has repeatedly defeated the government practically on every question. But the Government sits tight in its place: and Mr. MacDonald, as the head of the Empire, sanctions this flagrant autocracy, all his professions of democracy, self-determination

and constitutionalism notwithstanding. These Nationalists entered the pseudo-parliamentary institutions granted by the Government of India Act of 1919, which Mr. MacDonald glorified as the Magna Charta of India following in the footsteps of his bourgeois predecessors, in order to fight the autocratic government on the parliamentary ground. It was quite a constitutional position to take. We should think that such an eminently respectable and posivitively harmless method of political warfare would not fail to receive the approbation of Mr. MacDonald. But it was not the case.

It was precisely against this programme of parliamentary opposition that the anathema of Mr. MacDonald was hurled. He declared that the tactics of parliamentary opposition in India was unconditional and even "revolutionary," and shook his mailed fist at those who proposed to adopt these tactics, following the traditions of the British Parliament. Even Mr. Gladstone did not consider Parnell a revolutionary, nor did Mr. Baldwin lock Mr. MacDonald up in the Tower of London when he led the Labour opposition against the Tory Government.To appreciate properly to what an extent the Labour Government has violated all codes of democracy and constitutionalism, which are its articles of faith, it is necessary to take a retrospective glance at the political situation in India during the last decade and to have a picture of the present condition of the Nationalist Movement.

In the darkest days of the imperialist war, the British Government bought the support of the Indian bourgeoisie with the promise for a "new spirit in imperial relations." Had not the loyal assistance of the Indian people been assured, the extensive campaigns in the East could not have been carried on and the consequence might have been disastrous. Believing in the promise of Asquith, the Indian bourgeoisie heartily helped the British authorities to secure by force this valuable loyal assistance when it was not voluntarily given. So, although rather indirectly, the Indian people contributed plentifully towards the noble cause of the war for democracy, and as such they are entitled to a share

in its spoils. But they were not even given what was promised to them.

The British Government rewarded the Indian bourgeoisie with some concessions in the economic field and with a shadow of political right granted exclusively to the upper strata of the propertied classes, namely, the big capitalists and landlords. The scheme was to drive a wedge in the ranks of the Indian bourgeoisie. The signs of a widespread popular discontent, in consequence of the intensified exploitation during the war and the high prices that, followed, are already in sight. It was to be expected that the native bourgeoisie would not willingly let such a splendid opportunity go by without exploiting it to press their demand, unless some preventative measures were taken. The most advisable step to take was to split up the bourgeoisie and thus to weaken the imminent movement. This necessity gave birth to the famous Montague-Chelmsford Reforms which were embodied in the Government of India Act, of 1919.

By these reforms a mockery of parliament was given to India, the franchise extending to less than two per cent. of the population. A very complex system of bureaucracy was introduced in the administration. The object was to make a little room for the upper bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy without affecting in any way British supremacy in every important matter.

The new system was called dyarchy. The Provincial Governments were made partially responsible to the Legislatures with a majority of elected members; but the Central Government, in which was vested the supreme authority in every vital question, remained totally autocratic, although the Central Legislature also contained an elected majority. The partial responsibility introduced in the provincial governments were, however, practically nominal. The Governor rules with the help of an Executive Council composed of two or three officials and a Ministry also of two or three chosen by himself from the elected members.

These ministers, however, are not removable by a vote of the Legislature. This has been lately proved to the hilt. In several provinces, the government has been defeated repeatedly by the Nationalist majority in the Legislatures: votes of censure have been passed against the ministers: but not in one single case has the government accepted the verdict of the peoples' representatives. In the Central Government, even this shadow of responsibility does not exist. This brief information about the constitution of the present Indian administration must be given here in order to indicate fully the significance of the attitude of the Labour Government. The Government of India Act of 1919 was declared by the imperialist bourgeoisie to be a landmark in the political progress of India, and it found not a few enthusiastic supporters in the Labour Party, Mr. MacDonald himself being one.

These very meagre reforms were conceded very grudgingly and from the beginning they have been sabotaged by all conceivable means. Now comes Mr. MacDonald to tell the Indian Nationalists that they should be thankful to imperialism for this Great Charter, but should not insist upon its fulfilment. This is exactly what he and his colleagues have given us to understand since they became the custodians of the Empire.

If we stop to think how moderate is the demand of the Indian bourgeoisie, it becomes clear how atrocious is the attitude of the Labour Government. The self-determination demanded by the Indian bourgeoisie is only the right to a small share in economic exploitation and political administration. In the beginning the Reform Act satisfied practically all sections of the Indian bourgeoisie. Had the government been less miserly in giving that beggar a dole, the non-co-operation movement which shook the country in the years following might possibly have been averted. But the government was mortally afraid of the brewing mass discontent which was an echo of the revolutionary tempest that swept the world in the aftermath of the Great War. Having placated the bourgeoisie, it desired to crush this

discontent with an iron hand. The measures taken for this purpose meant taking away many times more than what had been given under the Reforms Act. A commission, presided over by an English judge, was set up to inquire into the causes and possibilities of the "seditious" movement. The commission, as was expected of it, submitted a report in which it was declared that there existed in the country a widespread revolutionary agitation. The report was concluded by two projects of law which would place the entire country practically under martial law for a number of years. The agitation begun against these projected legislations soon revealed to the lower strata of the bourgeoisie the sources of a new force which hitherto had never been brought to bear upon the Nationalist movement.

The constitutional agitation was readily responded to by the discontented masses, and, before the leaders had been aware of it, the movement grew too big to be contained within the narrow limits of protest meetings which passed resolutions. The industrial discontent, on the one hand, assumed the shape of a gigantic strike movement which swept the country: on the other hand, agrarian grievances were expressed through a revolutionary peasant movement which at one time came very near to a peasant revolt. The first stage culminated in the Amritsar massacre.

In those bloody days the British Labour Party had nothing but a few pious words to say. In a manifesto issued over the signatures of several leading British Labourites more concern was expressed for the safety of British women and children in India than for the lives and liberties of the Indians. A new era of constitutional advance, opened with such a blood baptism, has been found by the British Labour Party quite befitting with the doctrine of self-determination.

Hence the "reforms" granted by the Government of India Act of 1919 were very limited in their scope; they did not fully satisfy the lower strata of the Indian bourgeoisie. The latter desired something more, but by themselves were too weak to

press their demand. Therefore they reconciled themselves to the situation and gave their adhesion to the Reforms Act in the beginning. So much so that the very men like Gandhi, Nehru, Das, etc., who subsequently headed the non-co-operation movement and some of whom to-day are leading the Nationalist agitation in the Legislature, declared themselves in favour of the Reforms. They even went so far as to accept the clause which conferred upon the Viceroy the right of certification - a clause which subordinated the whole reformed constitution finally to the autocratic prerogative of the colonial proconsul. According to this clause, the Viceroy could pass a certain measure over the head of the Legislature or reject one passed even unanimously by the parliament. The fact that even this was swallowed by the Indian bourgeoisie showed how modest was their aspiration. But the spontaneous growth of a great mass movement changed the situation. It split the bourgeoisie, one faction standing firmly by the government, the other placing itself involuntarily at the head of a gigantic revolutionary agitation.

Then followed the famous non-co-operation movement led by Gandhi. The history of this movement is more or less known and need not be related here: nor can it be done within the compass of this article. After a rather spectacular career that lasted for three years, the movement collapsed more owing to its own reactionary socio-economic tendencies and political contradictions than under government prosecution, which, nevertheless, was also severe. One point, however, must be made clear. It is this. Although large revolutionary elements went into the composition of the non-co-operative movement, its programme and the demands put forward by the leaders have never been of a revolutionary nature.

For example, it never stood for separation from the Empire. On the contrary, Gandhi has always been and still is a partisan of British connection. If the revolutionary aspects of the movement became objects of government persecution, they were no less sabotaged, condemned and disowned by the leaders. In

fact the revolutionary possibilities of the non-co-operation campaign were ruined by the moderate character of the leaders. Now even this movement, which sacrificed itself on the altar of pacifism, so dear to Mr. MacDonald, and which valiantly struggled against and ultimately killed the revolutionary tendencies in its organism, failed to win the approbation of the British Labour Party.

Col. Wedgwood and Ben Spoor, who are the Indian experts of the British Labour Party and who have expressed more radical sentiments on this matter than any other of their colleagues, visited India during the hey-day of non-co-operation. They attended the Indian National Congress at Nagpur (1921) when the non-co-operation programme was adopted. On his return home, Col. Wedgwood expressed himself against the non-co-operation movement and warned the Indians to go slow. In spite of it, he has been looked upon in India as the prospective Labour Secretary of State for India under whose regime self-government would be conferred upon the people of India. This again shows how easily the demands of the Indian bourgeoisie could be satisfied much: but for even this degree of self-determination prove too much for Mr MacDonald. He has declared war upon India.

The non-co-operation programme was divided into three parts which corresponded to the three social elements that went into the composition of the movement. The strength of the movement was in its mass character and in the fact that for the first time in the history of the Indian Nationalist movement, the working class actively participated in it. The masses being the backbone of the movement, that part of the programme which hinged on militant mass action was the most vital part of the programme. But in spite of the mass character of the movement, its leadership was in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie reinforced by a large element of opulent intellectuals who socially and ideologically belonged to the big bourgeoisie, but strayed into the ranks of the non-co-operation movement, hoping that with

its help they would be able to wring more concessions from imperialism.

In course of time the vital part of the programme, the part calling for militant mass action, was pushed to the background and the other parts corresponding to the spirit of the two bourgeois elements came into prominence. Consequently the whole movement was placed upon an untenable basis. The economic aspect of the programme consisted of the impossible boycott of British goods and the reactionary attempt to revive backward modes of production, while on the other hand, in the political sphere, the success of the programme depended entirely upon the will of the element that had strayed in the movement from the camp of the big bourgeoisie.

The political programme was the boycott of the Legislatures set up by the Reforms Act, boycott of law courts, and boycott of schools. Of this triple boycott only the first was successful, because the first elections to the Reformed Councils took place in 1920, while the non-cooperation movement was pushed ahead by a tremendous upheaval of mass energy. But this boycott was the first fatal mistake of the movement. It left the field clear for the government. The Legislatures were filled with the representatives of the loyalist landlords and the big bourgeoisie. In other words, the leadership of the Nationalist movement permitted the government to sabotage the Reforms without any serious obstruction.

In course of time the non-co-operation movement went on losing all political importance in proportion as it severed its connections with the masses. By the end of 1922 the National Congress left the government alone and was engrossed in an internecine quarrel. The two bourgeois elements had fallen apart, once the leaven of mass energy was removed. This quarrel ended in a split, which marked the beginning of a new phase. The cry was to rectify the mistake of 1920. The petty bourgeoisie, who had stood at the head of the non-co-operation movement, was opposed to this new tendency, since it was sure to push them

into the background and throw the big bourgeoisie again in the forefront of the Nationalist movement. But separated voluntarily from the masses, thanks to their reactionary character, they could hardly hold their own against the radical intellectuals who were much more advanced politically. So the section of the upper bourgeoisie, that had strayed into the non-co-operative movement, repudiated the boycott of the Legislature and did not hesitate to split the National Congress on this issue. They easily carried the day. The three social elements, that went into the composition of the non-co-operative movement, fell asunder. The most advanced and conscious one, namely the element hailing from the upper bourgeoisie, returned to their spiritual fold. The second split, therefore, undid the previous one that took place in 1920 after the introduction of the Government of India Act and under the pressure of a great mass upheaval.

Five years after the inauguration of the "new era" Indian bourgeoisie stands to-day determined to make the best of the "constitutional reforms." And by an historical accident it has fallen upon a Labour Government to fight them. The first touch of reality put Mr. MacDonald to the test and he was found to discard his profession of self-determination without much ado.

The Nationalist bourgeoisie contested the elections of 1923 with the avowed object of demanding self-government. They declared their intention of backing up this demand by all parliamentary means available under the circumstances. They threatened to obstruct the functioning of the government by creating a deadlock if their demands were not granted. For various reasons the Nationalists won more seats than they themselves expected. Though only in one province they got a clear majority, in practically all the importance provinces as well as in the Central Legislature, they acquired a substantial minority. The main cause of this unexpected success was that, owing to the economic development taking place in the last several years, the bourgeoisie to-day requires a more vigorous representation than could be provided by the Liberals who accepted the Reforms

Act and stood faithfully by it when the government sabotaged it all the time and by every conceivable means.

The new Nationalist Party reflected the political and economic aspirations of the bourgeoisie much more energetically than the old Moderates who proposed to gain self-government by stages. This fundamental reason aided by many circumstantial stimuli sent strong Nationalist groups in the Legislatures. Consequently a stiff fight was to be expected in the parliamentary field. The situation was the most acute on the advent of the Labour Government. On many a previous occasion Mr. MacDonald had expressed his sympathy for the demands put forth by these parliamentary nationalists.

There was nothing revolutionary in their programme. What was demanded was quite within the limits of self-determination as interpreted by the Second International. It was the right of the bourgeoisie to determine how the natural resources and the man-power of the country should be exploited. But the British bourgeoisie had staked its claim prior to that of the sons of the soil. Therefore, the otherwise legitimate demand of the Indian bourgeoisie could not be admitted so easily. The fact that the would-be Prime Minister had formerly sympathised with Indian aspirations for self-government naturally encouraged the Nationalists who, therefore, were in very high spirit. The British government considered this a rather ominous sign. Mr. MacDonald was evidently taken to task for this when he was angling for Liberal support. Therefore, to reassure the British bourgeoisie on the one hand, and disillusion the Indian nationalists on the other, he sent his message to India. In this message he thundered:

"No party in Great Britain will be cowed by threats of force: and if any section in India are under the delusion that this is not so, events will very sadly disappoint them."

It was not necessary to wait for other events. The message itself was enough for the purpose of disappointing Mr. MacDonald's friends and admirers in India. The most remarkable

thing of the whole episode is the total unwarrantedness of it. Mr. MacDonald set up a ghost of his own imagination in order best to demonstrate his heroic determination to defend the Empire. In composing this message Mr. MacDonald had his own scheme. He was quite aware of the possibility that this would lead to some unpleasant criticism even from the ranks of his own followers. It would be asked: what about the right of self-determination? He manufactured the bogey of the "threats of force" to justify his position. He would argue: "I am not against self-determination. I am against use of force." But who on earth, ever talked of force in India? In fact, none has sacrificed so much for pacifism as the Indian bourgeoisie. They killed a splendid movement for the cult of non-violence. Now comes Mr. MacDonald to say that the followers of Gandhi were meditating the overthrow of the British Empire forcibly. Let us examine if there were any element of force in the programme and the demands of the Indian Nationalists.

The very fact that the Nationalists participated in the elections proved that they accepted the Government of India Act as a settled issue. Nowhere in the speeches, writings, resolutions and manifestoes of the Nationalists is to be found any challenge to the Empire. What was expressly demanded is the end of the bureaucracy, when the demand was the most extreme. Often the demand was much more moderate. There is not one leading Swarajist who has not on innumerable occasions deprecated the use of force and declared his faith in constitutional methods. The political demand of the Party, as stated in its programme, was Dominion status. None of the party leaders is any more revolutionary than Mr. MacDonald. In fact, there are a few among them who are his political disciples (except for his Socialism).

Now, what are the tactics that they proposed to adopt in order to realise this very moderate and highly constitutional demand? In one word it is parliamentary opposition. The plan was as follows: as soon as the Councils assemble the Nationalists would introduce a number of demands. If the government rejected these demands they would adopt the policy of consistent obstruction by voting against every government measure. In this way they would create a deadlock in the Councils and force the government to consider their demands. It indeed requires a very long nose to smell "threats of force" in this plan of purely parliamentary action.

In the beginning Mr. MacDonald might have seen red. He might have taken the Nationalist parliamentarians of India on their face value. He might have thought that they were going to overturn the Empire. But subsequent events have proved that nothing could be more moderate and constitutional than the demands of the Indian Nationalists. Has Mr. MacDonald been any more sympathetic towards these moderated demands? Has he made any gesture to prove that he has not altogether forgotten what he said previously about Indian aspirations? In short, has he made the slightest effort to meet the Indian Nationalist half way? Has he given any reason for us to believe that he has not totally repudiated his pet doctrine of self-determination? None of these questions can be answered in the affirmative.

The first demand of the Indian Nationalists was a resolution asking for the release of political prisoners or at least a fair trial for those held indefinitely in jail. The government refused to release the political prisoners on the plea that there is a widespread revolutionary organisation in the country inspired and directed by Communists abroad. It also intimated that the men held in jail without trial are arrested for their connection with the agents of the Communist International. Of course, the government could not make a cleverer move to disarm the Nationalists who are no fonder of the "Bolshevik agents" than is the government itself. They did not press the question any further; but the resolution was carried. The government looked upon the matter as an expression of opinion which in no way bound it. What is the crime of these "Bolshevik agents" after all? These men advocated that the Nationalist movement should not

neglect the interests of the workers and peasants, and that the latter should organise for the defence of their own economic interests. If this is "Bolshevism," then the British Empire to-day has a Bolshevik Government. Taking a leaf from his predecessors' book Mr. MacDonald tells us that the Indian masses require the protection of the British Government. What sort of protection is it which does not permit the most rudimentary signs of working class movement?

After the Labour Government came into office, the Viceroy of India declared in opening the New Legislative Assembly that he would continue to rule India with a firm hand. He challenged the Nationalists. He also talked of the Communist activities and the danger resulting therefrom. Finally came the statement of the new Secretary of State from India, Lord Olivier. In this statement the Indian policy of the Labour Government was formally formulated. The Labour Government backed up the attitude of the colonial pro-consuls. Lord Olivier roundly refused to entertain any proposition to grant further measures of self-government until the Reforms Act has been given a fair trial. It is stipulated in the Reforms Act that not later than ten years from the inauguration of the reforms a Royal Commission should be appointed to consider the grant of further measures of self-government. The sum total of the Nationalist demand has been that a Round Table Conference of the government and the spokesmen of the elected members should be immediately called to consider the possibility of this further grant without waiting the full term of the specified ten years. Lord Olivier categorically declared that such a conference was out of the question. In India the resolution of self-government brought in by the Nationalists was stoutly opposed by the government.

This resolution, which was so resolutely opposed by the Labour Government and the Indian Government, was as tame as it could be. It was so moderate that even the left wing of the Liberals, who had all along stood loyally by the Government, made common cause with the Nationalists. In fact, the resolution

was moved by one of them. The Government of India Act was not challenged: only some re-adjustment of relations was requested. Even this failed to fit in with Mr. MacDonald's notion of self-determination. But in the face of a united opposition of the Indian bourgeoisie, it was not possible to continue inflexible for ever. The opposition has been beaten down for all practical purposes. Now a little weakening could be shown. The Government of India magnanimously informed the Legislature that, without committing itself to any fundamental change in the present constitution, the promise for a departmental enquiry could be given. This is, then, the right of self-determination that has been conferred upon India by the British Labour Party.

Now let us see what sort of protection the Labour Government gave to the Indian workers. 150,000 textile workers have been locked out in Bombay for more than two months. The obstinate attitude of the employers caused the struggle. In the last five or six years, the Indian mill-owners had made fabulous profit. Now the trade is reaching normal level, so the rate of profit must be lowered. The owners do not want their pockets to be hurt. They desired to pass the burden on to the bent shoulders of the workers. The payment of the annual bonus of a month's wages was suspended. This led to a strike which was replied to by the employers with a general lock-out. From the first day of the lock-out the government sent armed forces to guard the mills: but when requested by the Labour leaders to do so, the governor refused to intervene in the conflict between capital and labour.

The only thing that stands to the credit of the Labour Government is the release of Gandhi. This act of grace was, however, forced upon the government. Besides, there is a deep scheme involved in it. If the Labour Government remains long enough in office, we may expect it to call an Indian deputation to London. Gandhi would be very helpful at the head of this deputation. He is too saintly to forget an act of kindness, and could be depended upon to go back empty-handed, but with a

full heart to call upon the Indian people to cultivate brotherly love with the imperialist rulers. Mr. MacDonald's profession of self- determination will then easily be converted into his passion for Imperial Federation. But he will not have the satisfaction of performing this inglorious task.

The bankruptcy of the programme of the Second International in European politics was exposed by the debacle of the German Social Democrats. The Labour Government in England will have very little new to add on that count. The utter hypocrisy of its humanitarian professions has now been demonstrated by the action of the British Labour Party. The peoples of the colonies cannot have the right of self-determination unless war is declared upon Imperialism. But the stalwarts of the Second International talk of self-determination in theory and become the defenders of Imperialism in practice.

M.N ROY.

WHO WILL LEAD?

The Party of the Cadets is an ephemeral and lifeless Party. This statement may seem paradoxical at a moment when the Cadets are achieving brilliant victories in the elections, when they are standing on the threshold of probably even more brilliant parliamentary victories…The Cadets are not a Party, but a symptom. They are not a political force, but foam rising from the clash of fighting forces mutually more or less counter-balanced… Indeed, they are composed of garrulous, boasting, self-satisfied, narrow-minded and cowardly bourgeois intelligentsia…"

Lenin wrote these words after the Revolution of 1905, when the Cadets were rising in power. History has borne out the prophetic nature of these words. In studying the history of the Indian revolutionary struggle, we find it very instructive to draw an analogy between the Swaraj Party and the Cadets as depicted by Lenin.

As a matter of fact, the political character and social composition of the Swaraj Party, which, during the last year and a half, dominated the political stage of India, can be equally characterised by these expressions used by Lenin, in analysing the role of the Cadets in Russia. In the same article Lenin compared the Cadets with worms born out of the decayed carcass of Revolution of 1905, and fattening on that carcass. This rather brutal characterisation can also apply to the Swaraj Party - the replica of the Cadets in India. A survey of the genesis and the political accomplishment of the Swaraj Party will justify this historical analogy. This retrospective glance at history is of great importance at this moment, when the Indian movement has reached the end of the period in which it was dominated by petty bourgeois ideology and by the consequent hesitating tactics in spite of its revolutionary mass composition. The lessons learned from the mistakes committed in the past will be greatly helpful in the coming stage of development in which the foundation of the movement is bound to be shifted on to new social classes, necessitating the crystallisation of new ideology and new organisational forms.

Lenin said that the Party of the Cadets was the growth on the dead body of the Revolution of 1905. Similarly the Swaraj Party rose out of the ruins of a great movement which did not reach such a definite revolutionary climax as the Russian Revolution of 1905, but which was undoubtedly the nearest approach to a revolutionary crisis in India. The collapse of the movement of mass passive resistance commonly known as the Non-Co-operation (or Ghandi) movement, led to the crystallisation of a certain political tendency which found expression in the Swaraj Party. It was the tendency towards liquidating the revolutionary character of the struggle for freedom and bringing the nationalist movement back to the bourgeois politics of reformism.

It should be recollected that the movement led by Ghandi did not suffer a defeat at the hands of external forces. It proved

itself to be too powerful for the forces of repression. It succumbed under the weight of its internal contradictions, the heterogeneousness of its social composition, and the weakness of its leadership. In 1921 and 1922 the Nationalist movement became so powerful that the government was thrown into a state of panic.

For the first time in the history of the Nationalist movement, the masses of the people were involved in it. The government was so much demoralised by the threatening character of the movement that it was on the point of making large concessions to the Indian bourgeoisie had the latter only had the courage to push a little farther ahead. But this could not be done unless the revolutionary potentialities of the movement were released. The bourgeois leaders, who stood at the head of the movement at that time, however, were not prepared to do this. The threatened overthrow of British imperialism in India, at any rate a serious weakening of its position, was avoided not by a defeat of the Nationalist forces but thanks to the cowardice of the petty bourgeoisie and treachery of the bourgeois intellectuals.

The Non-Co-operation movement was an organised protest against the Reforms of 1919. It embraced all the social elements except those who were directly benefited by the political rights and administrative concessions granted. Bat these rights and concessions were so insufficient that they touched only a very thin strata of the upper classes - landlords, big capitalists, and higher intellectuals. The object of the British government in granting the Reforms was to split the Nationalist ranks - to separate the big bourgeoisie from the impending mass revolutionary movement, ominous signs of which were already to be noticed in the latter days of the world war. The Reforms were successful in winning over the support of the upper classes; but their failure to meet the demands of the petty, bourgeoisie accentuated the discontent of the latter and drove them towards the masses, who were in a state of revolt owing to higher prices and other forms of economic exploitation.

These two social classes embraced by far the majority of the entire population. A movement so constituted was sure to be very powerful. In fact it did appear very much so in the beginning. But the cultural backwardness and utter lack of political education on the part of the masses placed the entire movement under petty bourgeois leadership. Consequently a movement, predominated of mass composition and essentially sustained by the first stages of a gigantic working class revolt, became the political weapon of the petty bourgeoisie.

The petty bourgeois opposition to the inadequate Reforms was crystallised into a movement to boycott the latter. The concessions made were not broad enough to affect the economic conditions and political disabilities of the middle classes. Therefore, the latter declared their intention not to participate in the reformed administration. Once placed on this basis, the Non-Co-operation movement ceased to consciously express the revolutionary forces on which it was essentially based. The widespread discontent of the masses which encouraged the disgruntled petty bourgeoisie to venture upon a resistance to imperialist autocracy was, however, not to subside because the middle class intellectual leaders failed to give it a militant political form. During the year 1920 and 1921 the entire country was the scene of a powerful strike movement on the one hand and a series of agrarian insurrections on the other. In proportion as the revolutionary forces grew powerful the leaders turned against them. This contradiction between the leadership and the movement led to the collapse of the latter.

The Swaraj Party was the outcome of this collapse. The dissatisfied lower middle class drifted into the turmoil of a revolutionary mass movement without properly appreciating the gravity of the steps they were taking. But the upper strata of the middle classes, which were more consciously actuated by bourgeois idealism, had been from the very beginning aware of the revolutionary potentialities of a movement based: upon an acute mass discontent. They knew that a peasant revolt which

was imminent on all sides was detrimental to the interests not only of British imperialism but also of native landlordism. They also knew that the rebellious workers employed in the industries could not be mobilised into a movement of national liberation without at the same time becoming conscious of the economic interests of their class, in which case such a movement would be directed as much against British imperialism as against Indian capitalism.

Both of these eventualities, namely, an. agrarian revolt against native feudalism and a strike movement against capitalism, were odious to those leaders of the Non-Co-operation movement who consciously represented the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The mass movement, which struck terror into the heart of imperialism, was sabotaged, repudiated and finally betrayed by the timid petty bourgeoisie which came under the counter-revolutionary influence of the bourgeoisie in proportion as it went away from the masses. As soon as the petty bourgeoisie committed political suicide, the way was clear for the representatives of the bourgeoisie to liquidate all the revolutionary tendencies in the Nationalist movement. The Swaraj Party gathered under its banner those advanced bourgeois elements who could give a co-ordinated and intelligent expression to the hostility against the revolutionary character of the Nationalist movement. These people began by criticising the Non-Co-operation programme as "impracticable." They argued that the Non- Co-operation movement failed owing to the impracticability of its, programme, and concluded that the movement should be given a new programme of "practical politics." The collapse of the movement, however, was not due to any weakness of the programme. On the contrary, it was due to the refusal of the leaders to carry out a programme, although not a few of those very leaders subsequently talked wisely about the impracticability of the revolutionary Non-Cooperation programme in order to justify a reversion to reformism.

The programme of Non-Co-operation was very practical and could be carried out to the great detriment of British Imperialism, had it not been purposely sabotaged by the leaders. It was so practical, that is, it corresponded so much to the objective conditions of the country at that particular epoch, that a very half-hearted propagation of the programme stirred up the masses to a point of revolt. While initiating the campaign for the rejection of the old programme in favour of a new one, C.R. Das (the leader of the Swaraj Party), condemned the Non-Co-operation leaders for having "bungled and mismanaged the movement when the mightiest government was on its knees."

This was the case in 1921 when the Executive Committee of the Indian National Congress, on which sat practically all the present leaders of the Swaraj Party, repudiated all forms of mass resistance and ordered a general retreat. (C.R. Das was in jail at that time.) It is true that the Ghandi-ite leaders became terrified by the forces at their command, and called for a retreat when everything was in favour of a vigorous aggressive action. But it is certainly ridiculous to lay the blame of the defeat at the door of the programme when the leaders consciously sabotaged it. The deplorable collapse of the Non-Co-operation movement was indeed the occasion for a new form of struggle with new ideology and under new leadership. What was needed was to adopt more aggressive tactics in order to make up for the ground lost by the mistakes committed and not a retreat straight on the grounds of reformism as was advocated by the Swaraj Party.

The programme of Non-Co-operation was to make the administration of the country impossible by withholding all popular support. No foreign government can exist in a country unless it can count upon a voluntary or involuntary support of a considerable section of the native population. This being the case, it is quite conceivable that the withdrawal of all such support will make the existence of a foreign government impossible. The principle points of the programme of Non-Co-operation were:

(1) to boycott the new parliamentary budget, set up under the Reforms Act of 1919;

(2) to boycott the law courts;

(3) to boycott government schools; and

(4) to boycott the merchandise imported from Britain.

All these items of boycott were preparatory to the climax of the programme - to suspend the payment of taxes and to organise mass disobedience of all laws. It was indeed a very practical programme. It was a very revolutionary programme as well. If put into effect, it would give political expression to the discontent of the masses. There could be no weapon more suitable for pulling down the political and economic structure of imperialism.

From the very beginning the bourgeois leaders desired to avoid any step that might, lead towards this climax. But the Nationalist movement in the post-war period had acquired a predominantly mass character; therefore, slogans embodying the objective demands of the masses could not be totally left out of the programme. Such demands were put forward but in the vaguest possible form. Though nothing definite was ever said as to when and how the "no tax" campaign would be inaugurated, the very slogan "non-payment of taxes" was attractive enough for the peasantry, heavily weighed down by all kinds of rents and taxes. The poor and exploited agrarian masses quickly caught on to this revolutionary slogan, and the nationalist movement dangerously approached a serious revolutionary crisis. This was enough to satisfy the petty bourgeois intellectuals who immediately changed their position.

The cardinal point of the new programme was parliamentary obstruction. The plan was to present a series of demands as soon as the Nationalists would be returned to the parliamentary bodies in a majority. Should the government refuse to grant these demands, a policy of indiscriminate parliamentary obstruction would be undertaken in order to make the administration of the country impossible. On the face of it, this programme sounded

very radical. It created new illusions for the petty bourgeois intellectuals, smarting in a prolonged state of inactivity caused by the collapse of the Non-Cooperation movement. For them to contest the elections and to enter the Legislature was not the end. They looked for a new period of active struggle when the government would reject the National Demands. The practical development of this struggle obviously depended on the character of the National Demands. The question was whether the demands would be such that the government would find it necessary to reject them, or they would be so formulated that it would not be impossible to find a modus vivendi. The leaders of the Party shrewdly avoided any definite answer to this question. The National demands remained shrouded in radical but vague phrases.

But the parliamentary fireworks failed to come up to their promised grandeur. Owing to the miserably limited franchise, the enthusiasm of the petty bourgeois intellectuals could not make a deep impression upon the results of the election. The enfranchised portion of the population, belonged to the landowning and capitalist classes and to the rich peasantry and higher intellectuals directly under the influence of those classes. Fully conscious of this state of affairs, the Swarajist leaders made it quite clear in their programme that the Party stood essentially for the landed and capitalist interests. But the necessity of rallying the petty bourgeois intellectuals rendered it difficult for them to make the point sufficiently clear. The Swaraj Party won a partial victory at the polls. In one province they secured a clear majority, while in the central legislature as well as in a number of important provinces they commanded a powerful minority.

But on the whole, they were not in a position to dictate their terms to the government. This partial victory was a relief to the Swarajist leaders. A greater victory would have been an embarrassment for them. It sounds paradoxical, but such was the case. Because as the circumstances stood they could argue that it was not possible to make the National Demands

uncompromising; nor commanding an independent majority, they could not carry those demands, and to secure a Nationalist majority for the demands, the latter must be made acceptable to the right-wing parties. A greater parliamentary victory would have embarrassed the Swaraj Party in that in such a case there would be no excuse for not presenting the full National Demands which would certainly be rejected by the government, and the movement will come back to the same old cross-roads, namely, whether to fight with imperialism or to capitulate with it. Since the Swarajists hated to be at these cross-roads, they preferred a partial victory to the complete victory.

Once in the parliament, the Swaraj Party did not delay in showing its class character. It immediately struck up an alliance with the left-wing of the bourgeois Liberals who had all along supported the government. This alliance was made at the sacrifice of the National Demands, heralded to the country in such radical phrases. The demands were moderated till they were acceptable to the bourgeoisie. The final form in which they were presented and carried through the legislature with the help of a section of the right-wing parties, was limited to the recommendation for certain measures in order to reconcile the conflict between the Nationalists on the one hand and the government on the other. But even this much was not granted by the government, which remained unmoved in its powerful obduracy.

Now the Swaraj Party was obliged to make good its second promise - that of inaugurating the tactics of parliamentary obstruction upon the rejection of the National Demands by the government. Then followed a year of parliamentary skirmishes only to culminate in the bankruptcy of the tactics of obstructionism. The Swaraj Party, in alliance with the left-wing Liberals, scored a series of parliamentary victories, of which great political capital was made by them. But for all practical purposes they were, of very insignificant importance. Undoubtedly this parliamentary opposition could be of some political value if it was coordinated with organised popular

resistance in the country. Had the Swarajists really meant to take up a struggle against imperialist absolutionism, they could have organised such a popular resistance in support of their parliamentary activities. They could have done it because the mass discontent which supplied the dynamic energy to the Non-Co operation movement was still in existence and could be brought to bear upon the political situation if a suitable expression was found for it. But the very fact that the Swaraj Party was the political crystallisation of the tendencies which from the very beginning had been hostile to any revolutionary developments, precluded it from taking up any serious struggle.

The parliamentary fireworks ended in a political deadlock when the Legislature of two provinces were dismissed by the government for their repeated refusal to pass the budget. There were but two alternatives, namely, to carry the fight into the country or to surrender before the uncompromising attitude of the government. This deadlock brought about a crisis inside the Party. The bourgeois element, consciously representing the interests of the capitalist and landowning classes, pressed upon the necessity of abandoning the tactics of indiscriminate obstruction in favour of coming to terms with the government; while the intellectuals, still partially under petty bourgeois illusions, stuck to their wordy radicalism. But the Party as a whole steadily gravitated to the right since the intellectuals lacked the courage and the desire to insist upon any revolutionary action.

At last the deadlock is nearing its end, and a compromise with imperialism is in sight. After six months of manoeuvring with the object of finding a formula by which a surrender to Imperialism can be camouflaged, the Party has openly declared its intention to give up its resistance. In the beginning of April a manifesto over the signature of C.R. Das, the leader of the Party, was issued, in which were laid down the conditions for the Party to give up its parliamentary obstruction and accept office. That is, the protest against the Reforms Act of 1919 is

liquidated. This attitude of the Swaraj Party was promptly reciprocated by a very reconciliatory speech by the Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead. In answering questions on the prospects of establishing better relations with the Indian Nationalists, Lord Winterton, the Under-Secretary of State for India, stated in the House of Commons that a sufficiently favourable atmosphere had been created, and that an invitation to the Nationalist leaders, including Das and even Ghandi to come to England, was no longer out of the question, although it might be more advisable to let the government of India carry on the negotiations.

Now, what is this favourable atmosphere which is so heartily welcomed by the Conservative Government of Britain? The favourable atmosphere consists of the fact that the Swaraj Party, which until recently appeared as the most recalcitrant left-wing of the Nationalist movement, has categorically renounced all programme of a struggle for independence and unequivocally committed itself to the programme of self-government within the British Empire. All the resistance on the part of the Indian bourgeoisie has ceased. What is wanted is a junior partnership in the exploitation of the Indian masses. Imperialism on its side in this period of history finds it necessary to have the Indian bourgeoisie as a willing ally rather than as an element of discord to be watched always and to be handled roughly when necessary. The period of clash between imperialism and native capitalism is closed. The Swaraj Party was the "foam" of this clash, to quote Lenin's telling characterisation of the Cadets. In the coming period of reconciliation there will be hardly any necessity for the existence of such a Party. Henceforth bourgeois nationalism will be expressed through the constitutional channels of his Britannic Majesty's most loyal opposition.

The Swaraj Party started its spectacular career with the promise to "end or mend" the present system of British administration. They certainly cannot claim that they have gone very far towards ending the British, domination of India. They have not even made a very serious effort to mend it. The mending has taken place not in the nature of the British government, but in that of bourgeois nationalism.

But now the question is: does this bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism indicate an end of the struggle for the liberation of the Indian peoples? It certainly does not. It simply means that the struggle against imperialism cannot be carried on to the victory under the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

It also means that the nationalist intellectuals may indulge in heroic phrases, but they have not the courage nor the ability to organise and lead the Indian masses in a revolutionary struggle for liberation. But the necessity for the Indian people to liberate themselves from political domination and economic exploitation by British imperialism still remains.

The forces of national revolution are not defeated. Only those who stood at the head of the movement up till now have found it profitable to enter into compromise with imperialism rather than to carry on a revolutionary struggle. The anti-imperialist struggle is a historic necessity.

It must be carried on, only with the difference that the social foundation of the Nationalist movement will be shifted to a different class. The workers and peasants will not only be the backbone of the nationalist movement in the coming period, they will have to assume the political leadership of the movement as well.

There are very important economic reasons for the political weakness of the Indian bourgeoisie. The basis of pure bourgeois nationalism is the conflict between native capitalism and imperialism. In the present period of capitalist development, this conflict becomes more and more superficial every day. Indian capitalism is so much interlinked with and dependent upon British imperialism, that a serious political conflict leading up to a revolutionary situation has become practically impossible. The superficial character of purely bourgeois nationalism was

envisaged by Lenin already at the Second Congress of the Communist International. In his report on the Colonial Commission he said:

> *"Certain rapprochement is to be noticed between the bourgeoisies of the exploiting countries and of the colonial countries. Very often, probably in the majority of cases, the bourgeoisie of the subjugated countries, supports the Nationalist movement, but at the same time, in agreement with the imperialist bourgeoisie (that is, together with it) fights against all revolutionary movements and all revolutionary classes."*

This rapprochement indicated by Lenin in 1920 has gone on very far in India. The general crisis of capitalism in the post-war period induced the British bourgeoisie radically to change its colonial policy. It was found out that the pre-war policy of forcing the colonies to remain in a state of industrial backwardness could no longer be maintained. Consequently it was decided that an industrialised India would be of much more value to British imperialism than the agrarian India of the past. The capitalist development of India is thus taking place not in antagonism to British imperialism, but with the sanction and to the interest of British imperialism.

This process of industrialisation renders the Indian bourgeoisie a protege of British imperialism. A protege cannot fight against its protector, although it might not relish its place of inferiority. But this new economic policy of British imperialism which deprives the Indian bourgeoisie of its insignificant revolutionary character, will, however, accentuate the crystallisation of more numerous and more powerful economic forces. It will quicken the class differentiation, thereby liberating the working class from the ideological domination of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the reactionary intellectuals. The working class will thus find itself in a position to grow into an independent political force. This process of revolutionising the anti-imperialist struggle will not be so protracted as it appears

in view of the present politically backward conditions of the Indian proletariat.

The capitulation of the Nationalist bourgeoisie does not by any means remove the fundamental economic causes which make for a chronic discontent among the masses of the population. The bourgeois Nationalists did not give a political expression to this discontent. On the contrary, they did their best to separate the nationalist movement from this fountain-head of revolutionary energy. So the immediate consequence of a compromise between the Indian bourgeoisie and British imperialism will be felt in the development of new forms of anti-imperialist struggle, which will embody the discontent of the toiling masses. In other words, the question of the hegemony of the proletariat in struggle becomes a question of practical politics in the next stages of the revolutionary movement in India.

M.N. ROY.

NEW ECONOMIC POLICY OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM: ITS EFFECTS ON INDIAN NATIONALISM

Bourgeois nationalism of India has ended in a complete compromise with imperialism, as was predicted by those who judged the situation with Marxian realism. Class antagonism developed side by side with national antagonism inside the post-war period of the Indian Nationalist Movement. At last, the former became predominant over the latter. The process of class-differentiation inside the Nationalist ranks caused constant regrouping in the political sphere. The tendency was toward the formation of a bourgeois bloc of constitutional opposition. Imperialism helped this tendency very cleverly and successfully with the policy of "Economic Concession and Political Repression." This move toward the Right - toward compromise with imperialism - was marked by two very distinct stages: first, divorce of the bourgeois Nationalist Movement from the most revolutionary social forces - workers and peasants; second, the schism between the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie.

The first was accomplished in 1922, when the programme of mass passive resistance to imperialism was abandoned in favour of parliamentary obstruction. The organisation of the Swaraj Party marked the separation of the Nationalist movement from revolutionary mass actions. By the end of 1925 the schism between the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie became wide enough to split the Swaraj Patty, which for two years had served the purpose of a bridge between the constitutionalism of the big bourgeoisie and revolutionary inclinations of the petty bourgeoisie. The split in the Swaraj Party means the burning of that bridge; consequently the last obstacle to a happy compromise between the Indian bourgeoisie and British imperialism, of course under the leadership of the latter, is removed.

The desire for this compromise is not one-sided. British imperialism is very desirous to stabilise the economic and political situation in India. It has long been recognised by far-seeing imperialist statesmen that a country like India cannot be kept long in subjugation without the active and willing support of an influential section of the native population. In other words, imperialism must have a special basis in India. Until the earlier years of the twentieth century British imperialism in India relied upon two native factors: one positive, the other negative. The first was the loyalty of the reactionary landed aristocracy which had been partly created and partly foisted up by the British conqueror.

The second was the passivity of the masses. Relying on these two factors, British imperialism could afford to ignore the feeble demands of the rising bourgeoisie and the revolutionary dissatisfaction growing among the petty intellectuals. Besides, until the World War, the economics of imperialism demanded that India (as well as other colonial countries) should be held back in a state of industrial backwardness in order to supply the market and raw materials to the metropolitan industries. Consequently, the relation between imperialism and the colonial bourgeoisie was that of antagonism.

This antagonism found its expression in the Nationalist movement. But there was another economic consideration which made the nationalism of the Indian bourgeoisie weak and compromising even in those days. Owing to the forced industrial backwardness of the country, the Indian bourgeoisie was mostly engaged in trade which was dependent upon British imperialism both politically and economically. Politically, because security and expansion of trade required a stable government and order in the country, which conditions had been fulfilled by the British; economically, because both the export and import trade being practically a British monopoly, the Indians engaged in it were economic vassals of imperialism. The Nationalist Movement, inspired and headed by such a weak social class, did not disturb imperialism.

The terrorist secret societies, through which the growing discontent of the unemployed and unemployable petty intellectuals was spasmodically expressed, could be dealt with successfully by brutal repression. The situation remained more or less like this till the eve of the World War. Soon after the outbreak of the world conflagration, it became evident that British domination in India could no longer be maintained on the old narrow social basis. The social basis of British rule could be widened and deepened only by drawing at least the upper strata of the Nationalist bourgeoisie within the economic orbit of imperialism. This necessitated a change in the economic policy of imperialism. Still another factor contributed to that change and precipitated it. The exigencies of war obliged Britain to relax her grip on the economic life of India. Thus began the new era which was characterised by Britain's desire to come to an agreement with the Indian bourgeoisie.

All along the grievance of the Indian bourgeoisie had been that the British government impeded industrial development of India. The two main planks in the Nationalist platform were fiscal autonomy and progressive advance towards self-government. The demand for fiscal autonomy. grew energetic

in proportion to the accumulation of capital in the hands of the Indian bourgeoisie. The phenomenal growth of British trade with India unavoidably caused a proportionate accumulation of capital in the hands of those Indians who were connected with that prosperous trade. The following table shows the growth of India's foreign trade since the beginning of the twentieth century, in rupees:

Quinquennial Average	Export	Import	Excess Export
1874-79	63	38	25
1879-84	79	59	20
1884-89	88	61	27
1889-94	104	71	33
1894-99	107	74	33
1899-04	122	85	37
1904-09	144	103	41
AnnualAverage			
1909-10	188	122	66
1910-11	209	133	76
1911-12	228	144	84
1912-13	246	166	80
1913-14	249	191	58

It will be noticed that the characteristic of this large volume of trade has always been a considerable excess of export over import. In countries in a normal economic (capitalist) condition, such a continual favourable balance of trade indicates a state of "national prosperity." But in India the ever upward bent of the line of excess of export indicates just the opposite. The part of the commodities exported, that was not covered by imports, did not go to create credit in favour of India. The surplus Indian export represented mostly the tribute to imperialism, a part being appropriated by the native trading bourgeoisie in a manner to be explained presently.

The continuous excess of export over import indicated that the Indian peasantry was terribly exploited. Even now nearly

70 per cent. of India's exports are raw materials and foodstuffs. Before the war the proportion was greater. Imports are mostly manufactured goods. The comparative smallness of their volume shows the strict limitation of the buying capacity of the Indian masses.

The latter produced and was obliged to give up much more than they could get in return. The trade balance in favour of India was divided between British imperialism and Indian traders. A portion of the surplus exports was paid up by the import of gold and silver, which was mostly absorbed by the upper classes of Indian society. The remaining went to the account of liquidating India's obligations to England for the benefit of British rule.

The following table shows how the value of excess export was divided up till the war:

Quinquennial Average	Excess Export	Treasure Imported	Spent to liquidate obligations in Britain
1874-79	25	10	15
1879-84	20	12	8
1884-89	27	13	14
1889-94	33	14	19
1894-99	33	8	25
1899-04	37	14	23
1904-09	41	22	19
AnnualAverage			
1909-10	66	31	35
1910-11	76	32	44
1911-12	84	49	35
1912-13	80	51	29
1913-14	58	37	21

NOTE: The tables are compiled from the figures in the Government Statistical abstract; round numbers approximating the exact value are used.

Thus the proportion of the surplus value extracted from the Indian masses, appropriated by the Indian bourgeoisie, during the period 1874-1914, in terms of money amounted to 6,710 million rupees, approximately. This wealth could not be converted into capital sufficiently profitably by investment in land and trade - two main avenues of exploitation open to the Indian bourgeoisie. The search for more lucrative industrial outlet became ever more persistent and crystalised in the demand for fiscal autonomy.

It is unmistakable - and therein lies the germ of subsequent compromise with imperialism - that the political plank of the Nationalist platform was not half as strong as the economic one of fiscal autonomy. What is meant by fiscal autonomy? It means that India should be autonomous (of Britain) in her financial and trade operations. It is evident that the autonomy in financial and commercial spheres cannot be effective without a simultaneous political economy. So, long as Britain remains the dominating political force - the State power - in India, she will not permit the Indian bourgeoisie to readjust the financial and trade relations in a way harmful to her interest. But, significantly enough, the nationalism of the Indian bourgeoisie never demanded political freedom - it does not do so even now.

Subsequent events have proved that by fiscal autonomy the Indian bourgeoisie meant a wider latitude to exploit Indian labour by converting their accumulated wealth into industrial capital. In course of time they appreciated the impossibility of realising even that much economic freedom without some political power.

In 1915, as condition for India's full support to Britain in carrying on the war to victory, the Nationalist bourgeoisie demanded self-government (within the Empire) and immediate grant of fiscal autonomy. Imperialism could no longer remain indifferent to that demand made in a very critical moment. The first step towards agreement was taken, to be followed by others in quick succession.

As a matter of fact, additional and unexpected events had already given rise among the imperialist statesmen, a tendency towards an agreement with the Indian bourgeoisie even before the latter definitely formulated their attitude in 1916. The then Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, in a despatch to the Secretary of State for India in the latter part of 1915, recommended the policy of fostering the industrial growth of India. He wrote:

"It is becoming increasingly clear that a definite and self-conscious policy of improving the industrial capabilities of India will have to be pursued after the war, unless she is to become more and more a dumping ground for the manufactures of other nations…The attitude of the Indian public towards this important question is unanimous, and cannot be left out of account…After the war, India will consider herself entitled to demand the utmost help which her government can afford to enable her to take her place, so far as circumstances permit, as a manufacturing country."- (Lord Tiardinge's despatch to the Secretary for India in 1915.)

Acting on this recommendation of the Viceroy, and in order to meet the demands of the Nationalist bourgeoisie, the British Government set up the Indian industrial Commission "to examine and report upon the possibilities of further industrial development in India."

A Nationalist leader and three foremost Indian capitalists sat on the Commission with representatives of imperialism. After two years of exhaustive investigation into the sources of capital, raw material, market and labour, the Commission recommended, among other subsidiary things:

1. That in future the government must play an active part in the industrial development of the country;
2. That India produces all the raw materials necessary for, the requirements of a modern community, but is unable to manufacture many of the articles and materials essential alike in times of peace and war. Therefore it is

vital for the government to ensure the establishment in India of those industries whose absence exposes us to grave danger in the event of war;

3. That modern methods should be introduced in agriculture so that labour now wastefully employed would be set free for industries;
4. That the policy of laissez faire in industrial affairs, to which the government clung so long, should be abandoned;
5. That the establishment of Industrial Banks should be encouraged by means of government financing if necessary;
6. That the necessity of securing the economic safety of the country and the inability of the people to secure it without the co-operation of the government, are apparent. Therefore the government must adopt a policy of energetic intervention in industrial affairs.

While the Commission was still carrying on its investigation, practical effect was given to the recommendations that it made subsequently. In 1917, the Indian Munitions Board was created "to develop Indian resources to meet the necessities of war and the situation created by the war." The (English) Chairman of the Industrial Commission, who had always been an advocate of the point of view that industrial development of India would strengthen the basis of imperialism, became the head of that newly-created State organ which gave a tremendous impetus to Indian industry. The Munition Board worked on the following lines:

1. Direct purchases in India of articles and materials of all kinds needed for the army, the civil departments, and railways;
2. The diversion of all orders for articles and materials from the United Kingdom and elsewhere to the manufacturers in India;

3, The giving of assistance to individuals and firms in order to establish new industries or develop old ones.

The result was reflected in the increased share of manufactured articles in export trade from 24 per cent. to 31 per cent., reached in two years. Besides, orders for large transport and military supplies were placed with Indian manufacturers, who were given State aid to fulfil the orders. The growth of the Tata Iron and Steel Company (Indian) is indicative of the situation in general:

Year	Pig Iron	Steel	Steel Rails
1915	154, 509	66, 603	45, 639
1917	167, 870	114, 027	72, 670
1918	198, 064	130, 043	71, 096
1919	232, 368	134, 061	70, 969

The net profit was as follows:

1915	Rs. 2,805,000
1916	Rs. 5,103,000
1917	Rs. 7,927,500
1918	Rs. 7,900,000

The next step towards agreement was the scheme of constitutional reforms prepared jointly by the Secretary of State for India, Montagu, and the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford. They proposed to give the Indian bourgeoisie and higher intellectuals a share in the legislative and administrative authority of the country. The main features of the Reforms were:

1. Modification of the control of the Indian Government by the British Parliament;
2. Creation of central and provincial legislatures with an elected majority;
3. Extension of the franchise to include the entire bourgeoisie and the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie;
4. Increase of the number of Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Council (Government) and appointment of

Indian Ministers to the Provincial Governors in addition to Executive Councillors (both English and Indian);

5. Transfer of local self-government to the Indians;
6. Opening of the higher positions in civil services to Indians, etc., etc.

These political reforms (essentially very inadequate), together with the recognition of the right of Indian capital, fully satisfied the Indian bourgeoisie. On the economic aspect, the Commission on Constitutional Reform expressed the following opinion:

"As the desirability of industrial expansion became clearer, the Government of India fully shared the desire of the Indian leaders to secure the economic advantages that would follow the local manufacture of raw products. English theories as to the appropriate limits of the State's activity are inapplicable to India. We believe that this is true in case of industries, and that if the resources of the country are to be developed, the Government must take action."

It is to be clearly noticed that the concessions made were not forced by the demand of the Indian bourgeoisie alone. Two other factors of very great importance asserted themselves on the situation. They were:

1. The exigencies of the war, and
2. The necessity of widening the social basis of imperialism. Still another factor came into play subsequently. That was the crisis of world capitalism caused by the war.

Towards the close of the world war the negative factor - passivity of the masses.- upon which British rule in India had relied, almost disappeared. In spite of the maturing rapprochement between imperialism and the Nationalist bourgeoisie, the country was in a state of revolt. The necessity of widening and deepening the social basis of the British rule in India by winning ever the native bourgeoisie become imperative. The Reform Act of 1919 was passed by the British Parliament to meet the situation. But the first great revolutionary expression of Indian nationalism could not be altogether suffocated by an Act of Parliament, A few years of disturbance were to follow. The revolutionary upheaval of 1919-22, however, did not, hinder the process of agreement. On the contrary, the fear of a revolution drove the Indian bourgeoisie to the arms of imperialism.

The appearance of tremendous revolutionary forces on the scene encouraged the petty-bourgeoisie, whose position would be scarcely improved by the Reforms, to oppose the reforms. Even a section of the bourgeoisie joined that opposition. But the policy of steady economic concession to the Indian bourgeoisie followed by imperialism, in course of time, knocked the bottom out of the opposition, which took the form of boycott of the reformed legislatures. It may once more be emphasised that the policy of concession was forced upon imperialism by two considerations entirely independent of the demand of the Indian bourgeoisie. They were:

1. To enlist the services of the Nationalist bourgeoisie in the attempt to suppress the revolutionary uprising of the Indian masses for freedom, and
2. To overcome the post-war crisis of capitalism by creating new markets and tapping the sources of cheap labour.

As a further encouragement to the process of Indian industrialisation, in December, 1919, the Government moved a resolution in the Legislative Assembly, appointing a commission to give practical shape to the recommendation of the Indian Commission. The Resolution says:

"The most obvious and direct form of assistance which the Government can give to the industries of the country is by the purchase of supplies required for the public services so far as possible in the country itself."

Referring to the cause and consequences of the establishment of the Indian Stores Department, the British Trade Commission in India wrote:

"In the first place, both the Indian and also the nonofficial European members of the Legislature are determined that, in future, all purchases of stores for Government requirements shall be made in India, and that all tenders shall be called for in India and in rupees. These claims have been met by the Government of India to some extent. The revised Stores Rules permit the newly-organised Indian Stores Department at Delhi-Simla to purchase almost unlimited quantities from stocks held in India or in the course of shipment. They also sanction purchases of machinery and plant from the Indian plant of British manufacturers or from their technical agents. There seems to be little doubt that the new Indian Stores Department will rapidly increase in importance, and that the centres of purchasing influence, so far as imported stores are concerned, will be transferred from London to India."

Already, in 1918, the Government had declared that they would place the order for 3,000 railway waggons with Indian manufacturers annually for ten years, provided that the prices were not higher than the prices at which waggons could be imported from other countries. A contract was made with the Tata Company for the supply of 20,000 tons of steel rails annually for three years. Another contract was made with the same firm for the supply of 10,000 tons of steel plates annually for a period of ten years. The Budget of 1922-23 allotted 1,500,000,000 rupees for the rehabilitation of the railways. On the motion of Sir Vithaldas Thakersey, a leading Indian industrialist and financier, the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution appointing a committee to investigate "what steps should be taken by the Government of India to encourage the establishment of the necessary industries so that as large an amount as possible of the railway rehabilitation allotment be spent in India."

In its report the Railway Committee cited the instances of the failure of Indian manufactures to successfully compete with the manufacturers of other countries. Consequently the opinion of the Committee was "that industries newly started in India for

the manufacture of railway materials of a fabricated character cannot, in the initial stage, compete without assistance against established industries abroad." As a logical consequence of this admission, the Legislative Assembly passed a Bill in June, 1924, granting bounty on the manufacture of railway waggons in India until the year 1929.

All these measures were heading towards Protectionism - the summum bonum, of Indian Nationalist demand. To the dissatisfaction of the Indian bourgeoisie, the Industrial Com. mission of 1916 had been precluded from touching the tariff question. Naturally, British imperialism was very reluctant to equip the Indian bourgeoisie -With a weapon that could eventually be turned against it. But events were moving fast. The decision to purchase railway material, structural steel, etc., manufactured in India when the amount manufactured could obviously not supply the demand, was an invitation for British capital to build industries in India. The concession to the Indian bourgeoisie was incidental. The process of accumulation of capital in the industries in Britain was on the decline; if British capital could not find other sources of investment which would lead to accumulation to make up for the decline at home, the post-war crisis of British imperialism would be decidedly fatal. Further, the Indian market was rapidly ceasing to be a British monopoly. It was invaded from all sides - United States, Japan, Germany, and Belgium taking the lead. The following tables show the situation as regards iron and steel trades:

Steel Imported

	1914	1922
Britain	59.8 per cent	45.7 per cent of total import
Belgium	17.0 per cent	30.7 per cent of total import
U.S.A.	2.2 per cent	13.7 per cent of total import

Even Germany, which had been totally eliminated from the Indian market up till 1920, recovered her position by 1922 to the extent of 12 per cent, of the total import.

Iron Bars and Channels in tons

	1920	1922
Britain	77, 726	17, 616
Germany	9, 743	38, 404
Belgium	39, 580	113, 116

The textile market, which had absorbed over 3o per cent. of British export to India, was seriously cut into by Japan. The following figures illustrate the situation:

Pounds of Yarn Imported

	Britain	Japan
1922-23	31, 018, 372	26, 546, 905
1923-24	24, 789, 923	20, 430, 025
1924-25	20, 759, 078	32, 324, 773

In the first quarter of 1925, Japanese import was 16,160,285 pounds as against 4,861,775 pounds from England. As regards woven goods, particularly of the finer varieties, Lancashire was still resisting the competition. But over 60 per cent. of India's textile demands consist of cheap rough stuff, owing to the low standard of living of the people. Ever increasing quantities of yarn of the lower counts, imported from Japan, would be woven in the Indian mills and drive the Lancashire cloth out of the Indian market. The consideration of this eventuality induced the Lancashire mill-owners, just recently, to come to an agreement with the Indian manufacturers by acquiescing to the abolition of the Excise Duty on the Indian cotton industry.

The greatest proportion of the 1,500,000,000 rupees allotted (in 1921) for the rehabilitation of railways was spent in England, but in the teeth of persistent Indian demand that supplies for Indian railways should be bought in the cheapest market. Eventually Indian orders would go to other countries by the sheer law of competition (the basic principle of capitalist economy), unless Britain permitted India herself to supply them.

British manufacturers were being dislodged approximately at the corresponding rate from other Eastern markets. To manufacture in India was the best counter-action. Cheap tabour, raw materials, and great saving on the cost of transport, taken together, would enable the British capitalists not only to hold their own in the Eastern market; the enormous profit made would also enable them to tide over the industrial crisis at home.

Soon after the conclusion of the war, a series of iron and steel manufacturing companies were registered in India, all connected with British firms. The principal ones were:

1. Indian Iron and Steel Company, Ltd., capital Rs.5,000,000. Registered in 1918. Projected production 180,000 tons of pig iron a year. Promoted by Burn and Co., a British engineering and shipbuilding firm in India.
2. The United Steel Corporation of Asia, Ltd. Capital, Rs.150,000,000. Registered in 1921. Projected annual production, 300,000 tons of pig iron and 200,000 tons finished steel, to be increased in a few years to 700,000 and 450,000 respectively. Promoted by Caramel, Laird and Co., of Sheffield.
3. The Peninsular Locomotive Co. Capital Rs.6,000,000, held partly by Kerr, Stuart and Co., of Stoke-on-Trent and partly by Indian capitalists. Will have the capacity to produce 200 locomotives a year to begin with.

The lead given by these firms was sure to be followed by others. (It has been proved to be so by subsequent events.) So tariff walls raised by the Indian Government would no longer operate against the British interests. They would protect the Indian key industries largely promoted and owned by British capital.

Besides, financial difficulties in the post-war years had obliged the Indian Government to raise import duties to a height which, for practical purposes, had Protectionist effects. From an average 3 per cent. ad valorem levied before the war for revenue

purposes, the import duties had been raised from 11 to 15 per cent. Judged from this side, what remained to be done was to call a spade a spade - come out officially in favour of Protection for India and thus satisfy the traditional demand of the Nationalist bourgeoisie.

In the beginning of 1921 the following resolution, moved by Lallubhai Samaldas (an Indian merchant and financier), was passed by the Legislative Assembly:

> *"This Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council that His Majesty's Government be addressed through the Secretary of State with a prayer that the Government of India be granted full fiscal autonomy subject to the provisions of the Government of India Act."*

Immediately after this resolution had been passed, the Secretary of State for India, in replying to a deputation from Lancashire (which had all along been the sturdy opponent to India's fiscal freedom), declared the decision:

> *"To give to the Government of India the right to consider the interests of India first, just as we, without any complaint from any other parts of the Empire, and the other parts of the Empire without any complaint from us, have always chosen the tariff arrangements which they think best fitted for their needs, thinking of their own citizens first."*

This speech was followed by a despatch, dated 30th June, 1921, to the Government of India, announcing the decision of the British Government to accept the principle of fiscal autonomy.

In October, 1921, was appointed the Fiscal Commission to examine the question of tariff, under the presidency of Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolla - a great Bombay millowner. Out of the 11 members of the Commission 7 were Indians, all prominent in industrial, commercial and Nationalist political fields. One unprecedented feature of the Commission was that it had only one English official on it. The Fiscal Commission submitted its report at the end of the next year. Basing itself on the conclusion "that the

industrial development of India has not been commensurate with the size of the country, its population and its natural resources, and that a considerable development of Indian industries would be very much to the advantage of the country as a whole," the Commission recommended, among other things:

1. That the Government of India adopt a policy of Protection with discrimination;
2. That a permanent Tariff Board be set up to consider the claims of particular industries for protection; free of duty;
3. That raw materials and machinery be admitted;
4. That the Excise Duty on the Indian cotton industry be removed;
5. That no obstacle be raised to the free inflow of foreign capital, but that Government monopolies or concessions be granted only to companies incorporated and registered in India with rupee capital, and Indians on their directorates.

Five Indian members of the Commission (the President himself included among them) did not consider the verdict of the Commission wide enough, and supplemented the General Report with a minority dissent. The essence of their point of view will be interesting and useful to note, since that represents the demand of the most radical section of the Indian bourgeoisie. The dissenting minority wrote:

1. There should be an unqualified pronouncement that the fiscal policy best suited to India is Protection;
2. It is a mere commonplace to say that a rich India is a tower of strength to the Empire, while an economically weak India is a source of weakness…India would have been of far greater help to England during the war if the policy of Protection had been adopted at least a generation ago…This (revision of the tariff policy) would have been to her great advantage, and would have been beneficial to the Empire…India, inhabited by a fifth of the human

race, can be of tremendous value, economic and political, both to herself and to the Empire, if development proceeds on the lines best suited to her conditions.

On the question of inflow of foreign capital, the minority appeared to differ from the view expressed in the general report. But this is what they said:

"We are unanimous in thinking that, in the interest not only of the consumers, but of the economic advancement of the country, it is essentially necessary that industrialisation should proceed at rapid paces…We will, therefore, state at once that we would raise no objection to foreign capital in India obtaining the benefit of protective policy, provided suitable conditions are laid down to safeguard the essential interests of India."

The conditions recommended by the minority, however, are the same as stated in the general report, namely: incorporation of companies in India with rupee capital and proportionate Indian directors.

In February, 1923, the Government of India declared the acceptance of the principle of discriminating Protection recommended by the Fiscal Commission as a whole. The Government Resolution, unanimously adopted by the Legislative Assembly, accepted "in principle the proposition that the fiscal policy of the. Government of India may legitimately be directed towards fostering the development of industries in India."

A few months later, acting upon the recommendations of the Fiscal Commission, the Government appointed the Tariff Board consisting of three members, two of whom were Indians. Thus an agreement was reached between the Indian bourgeoisie and British imperialism on the vital question of economic antagonism. Without vitally injuring imperialist monopoly, concession was made to Indian capitalism at the expense of the masses.

The Tariff Board began, of course, with the Iron and Steel Industry. The Tatas immediately came forward with the demand for a 33.5 per cent, duty on imported iron and steel. On the recommendation of the Tariff Board, the Government, in May, 1924, brought before the Legislative Assembly the Steel Industry (Protection) Bill, which set up a tariff varying from 20 to 25 per cent. on fabricated iron and steel entering the country and a large bounty on the production in India of railway waggons. The Bill authorised the Government to raise the duty in case one or more of the dutiable articles would be found to be imported into India at such a price as would be likely to render ineffective the protection intended. The Bill passed the Legislative Assembly with very little opposition. The Swaraj Party abandoned obstruction and voted with the Government.

The effect of Protection on the Indian iron and steel industry can be judged from the following estimated growth in the production of the Tata concern behind a tariff wall. Total production in 1923, 121,000 tons. It will increase to 250,000, 335,000, and 390,000 tons in the three succeeding years.

Hardly a year after the passage of the Protection Act, the Tatas declared that the duties did not give them enough protection and demanded its increase. The Government, with the sanction of the Assembly, granted the demand, not by additional duty, but by a substantial bounty on production to guarantee a fixed margin of profit.

The Tariff Board then recommended protection for the paper and cement industries, and is at present considering the claims of the coal mining industry. Since the industries, whose claims are to be investigated, are suggested by the Government, the protection for these industries is a foregone conclusion.

The climax of the policy, which has transformed the economic relation between the Indian bourgeoisie and British imperialism from antagonism to co-operation, was the abolition of the 3.5 per cent. Excise Duty on the Indian cotton industry. With the abolition of the Excise Duty, the premier industry of India also becomes "protected," because, as against the 3.5 Excise Duty, there has been a duty of 11 per cent. on the cotton goods imported, which

duty remains in force. One of the outstanding Nationalist grievances has always been "the strangling of India's premier industry in the interest of Lancashire." The phenomenal growth of the Indian cotton industry does not justify the grievance. The industry, with an aggregate capital of Rs.300,000,000 (in round numbers) made a total clear profit of Rs.350,000,000 in the period of three years, 1919-21. Even when, in September; 1925, the workers (150,000) employed in the Bombay mills, were locked out to enforce a further wage cut of 11.5 per cent. (in addition to a 20 per cent. cut in 1924) on the pretext of "ruinous" trade depression, not less than half the mills were paying a fairly high rate of dividends. However, the abolition of the Excise Duty removed the last cause of friction between the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism. The political effect of this step has been to split the Nationalist movement along the line dividing the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie.

This concession again was made not in deference to the demands of the bourgeois Nationalists. Consideration of Britain's own economic interest was there, beside the subtle policy of politically isolating the petty bourgeois Nationalists by showing the Indian capitalists that their economic growth was not only possible, but even could be fomented within the orbit of imperialist economy.

In spite of the enormous growth of. native production, India still imports nearly 50 per cent. of her textile requirements, which until recently used to be supplied by Lancashire. But in the last years things have changed greatly. Japan has been breaking into the Indian market with alarming rapidity. Her share in the Indian trade increased from 0.3 percent., in 1914, to 9.1 per cent. in 1924. In 1925 the proportion was expected to be much greater. England cannot possibly compete with Japanese goods produced by sweated labour. Indian mills worked by coolie labour can alone do that; and the British bourgeoisie can always participate in the resulting profit by exporting capital to India to be invested in those mills. It is remarkable that before

the. abolition of the Excise Duly was declared, the President of Bombay Millowners' Association, N.N. Nadia, visited England and had conferences with Lancashire millowners. In view of the stormy opposition of Lancashire when the duty on cotton goods imported into India was raised from 5.5 per cent. to 11 per cent., without a simultaneous increase in the Excise Duty, the gracious acquiescence of Lancashire to the abolition of the small Excise Duty without touching the comparatively high import duty is remarkable. The explanation of this changed attitude is provided by the following quotation from a statement issued by a joint meeting of the Manchester millowners convened immediately after the announcement abolishing the Excise Duty:

> *"If the industrial and general situation in India improves in the way in which it is so much desired, it is clear that the Lancashire industry may hope for better trade as a result. That there is a potential purchasing power in India sufficient to engage the producing power of both Indian and Lancashire industries, cannot be doubted… It is to be hoped that in the new situation now created we may find ourselves moving towards a position where the needs of the Indian market will be met to an increasing extent by her own manufacturers in their class of product, and by Lancashire in the types upon which she will naturally concentrate. Such a state of affairs would satisfy the legitimate aspirations of India, whilst not doing injustice to the Lancashire industry. If this situation, frankly recognised by both parties, could lead to the fostering of a better spirit of mutual sympathy, support, and accommodation, we would be prepared to accept any difficulties which may be imposed on Lancashire by the present decision in a generous manner." (The Economist, December 5, 1925, p.939.)*

The situation is obvious: Indian and British capital made up their age-long quarrel and came to an agreement against the common foe, Japan. Referring to the abolition of the Excise Duty, The Economist (December 5, 1925) wrote:

"The fact of the matter is that times have changed. India has now fiscal autonomy, and it is useless for Lancashire to make protests against reductions in Excise Duties or increases in Import Duties. It must not be forgotten that this action of the Indian Government will probably be a more serious matter for Japan than this country. Lancashire realises more fully than ever that in the future she will have to concentrate her machinery more and more on the finer makes of cloth; leave the coarser materials to be made by the mills in the East. During the last few years leading authorities have noticed a desire on the part of Indian consumers of cotton cloth to purchase higher-quality goods. If this is maintained and extended, as there is reason for thinking that it will be, if the purchasing power of the natives is increased, then cotton manufacturers in this country have nothing to fear. It is primarily desirable that a spirit of friendship and goodwill should exist between the people in this country and of India." (Economist, December 5, p.939.)

The abolition of the Excise Duty made a tremendous impression in India. Though reluctant to say so openly, the Nationalists generally recognised it as an unmistakable sign of a "change of heart" on the part of Britain; and a "change of heart" was all that the Nationalists wanted as the price the British Government on the basis of the reformed constitution.

Another very significant event was the appointment of a committee to investigate and recommend under what conditions foreign capital should be admitted into India. The report of the committee accepts all the conditions laid down by the minority of the Fiscal Commission. This means that in the immediate future industrialisation of India will be carried on jointly by Indian and British capital.

It will be interesting to examine the considerations which induced British imperialism to radically change its economic policy in India, as a by-product of which change the aspirations of the native bourgeoisie have been to a great extent satisfied.

The political consideration has already been mentioned. It is the recognition of the fact that the struggle for national freedom is no longer the political expression of the comparatively weak capitalist and intellectual classes. Its social basis has been enormously widened to include practically the entire population. Its objective programme, has, therefore, changed from constitutional agitation for economic concession and administrative reform to - Revolution. The quarrel between imperialism and the native bourgeoisie was over the division of the surplus value produced by the Indian masses. It will pay imperialism to lessen its lion's share to tiger's share, rather than to risk the loss of everything. British imperialism acted according to the Hindu dictum - "faced with total destruction, the wise forego half,"

An examination of the economic consideration will, however, show that it will not cost imperialism nearly as much to buy off the services of the Indian bourgeoisie, and even the upper stratum of the middle classes, as against the revolutionary danger coming from the masses. As a matter of fact, it will cost nothing.

The interest of British capitalism demands not only guarding of Indian markets against Japanese and American aggression; a continual extension of the market is also demanded. Markets must be found - created - for the British manufactures consumed in Central and Eastern Europe before the war. India offers great possibilities in that direction. But the economic ruin of the Central European countries greatly reduced the purchasing power of India. That means, just at the moment when British capitalism wants a bigger market in India, there is a shrinkage in the Indian market. In spite of a rise in the value of the total foreign trade of India (Rs.490,000,000 in 1922), the volume was 28 per cent. less than in 1914. The reason of this shrinkage is this: While on the average 60 per cent. of India's imports come from Britain, about 60 per cent. of her exports go to countries outside the British Empire. Since the war most of the European countries, that used to consume such a large portion of Indian exports,

bought much less. The situation is illustrated by the following table:

Total amount of exports to	1914	1922
Austria and Hungary	99,748,000	8,355,000
Belgium	20,648,000	80,032,000
France	176,827,000	98,270,000
Germany*	263,558,000	162,777,000
Italy	78,351,000	58,378,000
Russia	24,542,000	35,000

* Germany's share went down as much as 13,859,000 in 1920.

This serious fall in her export trade naturally reflected upon India's ability to import, ultimately hurting the British manufacturers, since the major part of her import comes from Britain. All along a large surplus of export over import represented the proceeds of imperialist exploitation, because the major portion of that surplus was used off to liquidate "India's obligations in Britain." In 1920 the balance of Indian trade (a balance artificially maintained in the interests of imperialism) was upset. Imports showed an enormous (890,000,000) excess over exports. Next year the disparity was reduced to 440,000,000 by a corresponding reduction in imports. The situation was extremely alarming for imperialism. There was a heavy deficit in the budget. The representative of the Government of India, Charles Innes, informed the Imperial Economic Conference (London, 1923): "Thanks to the war and disorganisation caused by the war, we sell less and therefore we buy less. This decrease of trade hits us in many ways." Further on the same speaker explained the new economic policy of the Government of India. He said:

"I am aware that it has caused some alarm in this country, but if, as we hope, the result of this policy (of Protection) is to increase the wealth and productiveness of India, then those who trade with India have nothing to fear. Already that trade is considerable in volume, but it is small in comparison with the

size of the country and the population. In India we have 315 millions of the people - roughly one-fifth of the human race, and if only we can raise the standard of living of these millions and increase their capacity to consume goods, India's potentialities as a factor in international trade and as a market are almost limitless."

In the new state of world economy, it has become impossible for the British capitalists to extract tribute from India in the shape of a large unpaid-for surplus of export over import. The greater part of the foreign market for Indian produce of raw material has been ruined almost beyond repair. Therefore, imperialist plunder must find a different expression. To arrest the shrinkage of British trade with India, caused by the reduction in the latter's export trade, her purchasing power should be otherwise increased. This can be done by raising the standard of living of the Indian people. The standard of living of the Indian people, again, cannot be raised unless the choking grip on her economic life is considerably loosened. On the other hand, since sufficient market for Indian raw produce cannot be found abroad, it must be created inside the country. This must lead to industrialisation. Industrialisation of a country with such enormous sources of raw material, cheap labour and potentially unlimited market, in its turn, will open up for British capital new fields guaranteeing the possibility of almost fabulous accumulation. British capital invested in India will extend the market for the production of home industries.

These are, then, the fundamental considerations which induced British imperialism to adopt a new colonial policy permitting the growth of Indian capitalism within certain limits.

To sum up. Since 1916, the British Government has introduced a series of economic measures that arc greatly beneficial to the Indian bourgeoisie. Consequently the antagonism between imperialism and Indian capitalism has been, at least for the time being, almost eliminated. The political result of this changed economic relation has been reflected in a steady

decline of the Nationalist demand, and a pitiable bankruptcy of the mainly petty-bourgeois Swaraj Party, whose programme reflected purely capitalist interests.

What are the cardinal demands of the Nationalist bourgeoisie? Impetus to the industrialisation of the country; fiscal autonomy; protection. All these have been realised, incidentally in consequence of the attempts of British capitalism to overcome the serious post-war crisis by means of a readjustment of the economic basis of the Empire. The demand for self-government was put forward on the hypothesis that unless the native bourgeoisie possessed some political power, the programme of the free development of Indian capitalism could not have been realised. Now, it is demonstrated in practice that the economic programme of bourgeois Nationalism can be realised, in spite of the imperialist opposition to a rapid political change demanded by the petty bourgeoisie. In other words, the bourgeoisie has been convinced that its economic development is possible within the framework of imperialism.

M.N. ROY.

3

K. B. Hedgewar

Keshava Baliram Hedgewar (Nagpur, India April 1, 1889 - Nagpur, India June 21, 1940) was founder of Hindu nationalist organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Hedgewar founded the RSS in Nagpur, Maharashtra in 1925, with the intention of promoting the concept of the Hindu nation. Hedgewar drew upon influences from social and spiritual Hindu reformers such as Swami Vivekananda and Aurobindo to develop the core philosophy of the RSS. After being sent to Kolkota to pursue a degree in medicine, Hedgewar was drawn into the influence of secret revolutionary organisations like the Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar in Bengal. He was also a member of the Hindu Mahasabha till 1929. Hedgewar was imprisoned for sedition by the British government in 1921 for a year and again in 1930 for nine months. After his spell in prison he instructed the RSS to remain aloof from political activities including the Salt Satyagraha (1930) and continue mainly as a social organisation.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Dr Hedgewar was born in 1889 on the Marathi New Year. He hailed from a Deshastha Brahmin family which was originally from Kundakurti, a small village in Bodhan taluka near the border of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh states. Near this village, three rivers meet to form a Triveni sangam. The rivers are Godavari, Vanjara and Haridra. The Hedgewar family is

from Rigveda's Aashwalayan Sutra's Shakalshakhiya Deshastha Brahmin branch. The gotra of the family is Kashyap. Shri Vallabhesh Brahmin is considered as their mula-purush (family originator) of the family. This Vallabhesh brahmin is connected to Shri Shripad Shrivallabha, the first avatar of Dattatreya. It is said that he was revived by Shri Shripad Shrivallabha when he was killed by dacoits on a Guru-dwadashi day. This story is depicted in Shri GuruCharitra's tenth adhyaya. Even today in the Hedgewar family, this story is remembered by tradition. This is not a far fetched connection as the tradition of visiting Ganagapur on Guru-dwadashi day is still followed in these families and in Gurucharitra the story states the gotra of Vallabhesh brahmin to be Kashyap.

In his early childhood Dr Hedgewar lost his parents and was educated by his elder brother. After matriculating, he decided to go toKolkata to study medicine. During those times Kolkata was the hub of armed revolutionary activities, which was one of the main reason of his attraction towards this city for graduation[citation needed]. He immediately joined Anushilan Samiti and had contacts with famous revolutionaries like Surya Sen. He came to believe that although the revolutionaries had immense determination, in a country of continental proportions it was impossible to instigate an armed insurrection. After completing his graduation, he returned to Nagpur, disillusioned with armed movement (although he maintained contact with them and is also said to have given refuge to Rajguru in Akola).

In Nagpur he became involved with social work and also with the Tilak faction of the Congress Party, through which he developed a close association with Dr Moonje. In the 1920 session of INC, which was held in Nagpur, he was appointed as the Deputy Chief Co-ordinator of volunteers overseeing the whole function. This volunteer organisation was named as "Bharat Swayamsewak Mandal" which was headed by Dr. Laxman V. Paranjape (Dr. Hedgewar as his Deputy). All volunteers were told to wear a uniform (to be made at their own expense) which

was later on adopted as RSS's official uniform from 1925 to 1940. This could be called as the real beginning of RSS because Dr L. V. Paranjpe had declared the intention of starting such an organisation in future (information taken from Dr. Hedgewar's first ever Biography page No 73, published in 1960, written in Marathi by Late Mr. N. H. Palkar and Preface by Late Mr. M. S. Golwalkar Guruji (then Chief of RSS)).

BACKGROUND OF RSS

Dr. Hedgewar slowly came to the conclusion that all the problems he felt the Hindu community in India faced - subjugation and oppression by 'foreigners' in the present and past, provincialism, and untouchability - were a result of an inherent flaw in the Hindu character rather than problems themselves: "If one is suffering from some rashes on skin, then applying a balm on these rashes are not a remedy if these rashes are arising from a defect in blood."

He felt a remedy was a cultural organisation that would unite Hindus on a common platform and instill among them discipline and national character; in this endeavour, he was blessed by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who was then under house imprisonment in Ratnagiri.

INCEPTION OF RSS

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) first met in 1925 in a small ground in Nagpur with 5-6 persons on Vijaya Dashami. The basic element of RSS was to be the Shakha (i.e. branch); in every town/village, on open ground, everyday, for an hour swayamsevaks were toperform drills, exercise and chant slogans.

His initial followers included Bhaiyyaji Dani, Bhaurao Deoras, Balasaheb Deoras, Vyankappa Patki, and Appaji Joshi.

CONGRESS, THE RSS AND LEGACY

The 1934, training camp of RSS was held at Wardha near Sevagram. Gandhiji himself visited the camp was astonished to

see that during lunch or dinner there was no separate queue for untouchables. Many swayamsevaks even didn't know the caste of person besides them. When pointed about this miracle, Doctorji replied that all are Hindus here irrespective of their caste. Dr Ambedkar also visited the camp and was amazed by the simplicity with which casteism was replaced by unity and equality.

Doctorji encouraged swayamsevaks to participate in political movements like the Civil Disobedience of 1931. He himself participated in Jungle Satyagraha of 1931,while appointing Appaji Joshi as Sarsanghchalak for that period.

Within 5 years of its establishment, government servants were banned from visiting RSS functions. Government officials are still banned from visiting RSS functions, as it conflicts with the constitutional declaration of India being a secular nation.

Hedgewar claimed that "at the heart of Hindu culture is Hindu religion, and its noble ideas are from the Vedas", also asserting that the diverse languages of India were offshoots of Sanskrit.Robinson, Biography of Golwalkar, Oxford University Press 1967. Hedgewar believed that character building could be achieved by engaging in physical exercise, bodybuilding, and sports. In 1999 the Government of India honored Hedgewar by publishing an Indian Postal Services stamp.

Keshav Baliram Hedgewar was born on Varsha Pratipada, the Hindu New Year Day, 1st April 1889, at Nagpur. Even as a child he started questioning how a handful of foreigners could for so long rule over a vast and ancient nation like Bharat.

No wonder that he threw away the sweets distributed on the occasion of the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria's coronation. He was eight years old at the time. When studying in high school he started participating in nationalist activities, and, in fact, unfurled the banner of independence during Dusserah at Rampayali in 1907. The intensity of his urge to free the Motherland grew steadily. In 1908, he was expelled from

school for leading the students in raising the 'seditious' cry of 'Vande Mataram'. He had to move to Pune to complete his matriculation. Hedgewar opted for a medical course in Calcutta, chiefly prompted by the prospect of getting first-hand acquaintance with the underground movement.

He soon became a core member of one of the leading revolutionary groups called Anusheelan Samiti, and also plunged himself into various social-service activities. When the river Damodar was in floods in 1913, he rushed to join the relief team. He returned to Nagpur in 1916 as a qualified doctor. However, he did not (indeed never intended to) practise medicine despite dire poverty at home. Remaining a bachelor, he preferred to become a physician to cure the ills of the nation. By then, he had established active contact with stalwarts like Lokmanya Tilak, Dr. Munje and Loknayak M.S. Anay. He worked in responsible positions in the Congress and Hindu Mahasabha, till the early 1920s. Hedgewar's public speeches of those days were sheer fire and brimstone. It was not long before he had to face court-trials. In one such trial, he defended himself declaring, "The only government that has a right to exist is a government of the people. The Europeans and those who call themselves the government of this country should recognise that the time for their graceful exit is approaching.

He was awarded one year's rigorous imprisonment. After release from prison, Dr. Hedgewar, while continuously immersed in various social and political activities, intensified his quest for an understanding of the true nature of our nation for whose freedom the struggle was being carried on. Political emancipation from the foreign rule alone could not provide the cure for all the nation's ills.

Bharat is not a nation born recently. It has not only been a nation for millennia, but also had made phenomenal progress in science, commerce, arts, technology, agriculture and other spheres, not to mention philosophy and the spiritual domain wherein its achievements continue to elicit wonder- ment to this

day. It is also a fact of history that the cultural empire of Bharat extended to the whole of South-east Asia for over four centuries. Equally, it is a sad fact of history that social disunity and dissension have been the cause of Bharat's politicial subjugation by alien invaders.

The 800-year-long resistance of the Hindus to Islamic rule had its own lesson for the British. Seeing that physical repression would not be of much avail, the British, through subtle and not-so-subtle ways, attempted to sub-vert the Hindu mind itself. They did succeed in part; and a Westward-looking social segment was created, mainly through enforcing the new system of education tailored to generate armies of clerks and 'brown sahibs'. Needless to say, in such an environment, a cleavage developed between the society and its cultural roots and legacy. The nation's identity became eroded.

It was to such a national self-oblivion that a cure had to be found. The Congress leaders' policy of appeasement of the Muslims was but one symptom of the malaise. It is an irony of history that - even after paying the ultimate price of vivisection of their cherished motherland - the Hindus have been treated as second-order citizens by successive governments of post-independence Bharat.

This was indeed foreseen by Dr. Hedgewar. Years of thinking had convinced him that a strong and united Hindu society alone is the sine quaiwn for not only the all-round prosperity but for the very survival of Bharat as an independent sovereign nation. Social cohesion alone could ensure national integrity.

Dr. Hedgewar's response to this challenge was the founding of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in 1925. The sweep and amplitude of one great mind can be fully grasped only by minds with a like vision and imagination. Thus, even in the early days of the Sangh, it drew praise and approval from eminent stalwarts including Mahatma Gandhi, Savarkar, Subhash Chandra Bose, Madan Mohan Malaviya and others. The first Shakha of the Sangh was started with a handful of youth at Nagpur. Gradually,

Shakhas sprouted in other provinces. Soon, there were vast numbers of 'Pracharaks' (whole-time social workers totally dedicated to nation-building activities) working for fulfilment of the Sangh mission. Dr. Hedgewar toiled night and day to lay a secure foundation for strengthening and growth of the Sangh. That tremendous work spanning fifteen years did take its toll, and Dr. Hedgewar succumbed to illness on 21 June 1940 - at the comparatively young age of 51.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH NAZI AND FASCIST IDEOLOGIES

If they grow stronger they can play the part of Sudeten Germans alright. But if we Hindus in India grow stronger in time these Muslim friends of the league type will have to play the part of German-Jews instead. We Hindus have taught the Shakas and the Huns already to play that part pretty well. So it is no use bandying words till the test comes. The taste of the pudding is in its eating. (V. D. Savarkar, Hindu Rashtra Darshan, G. Khare, Bombay, 1949, page 65)

Hitler knows better than Pandit Nehru does what suits Germany best. The very fact that Germany or Italy has so wonderfully recovered and grown as powerful as never before at the touch of the Nazi or Fascist magical wand is enough to prove that those political 'isms' were the most congenial tonics their health demanded…Pandit Nehru went out of his way when he took sides in the name of all Indians against Germany and Italy.

Pandit Nehru might claim to express the Congress section in India at the most. But it should be made clear to the German, Italian or Japanese public that crores of Hindu Sangathanists in India who neither Pandit Nehru nor Congress represents cherish no ill-will towards Germany or Italy or Japan or any other country in the world simply because they had chosen a form of Government or constitutional policy which they thought suited best and contributed most to their national solidarity and strength

('Speech on India's Foreign Policy', Poona, 3.11.1938 in V. D. Savarkar, Veer Savarkar's Whirlwind Propaganda, A. S. Bhide, Bombay, 1941, pages 51-52.)

Germany was perfectly justified in uniting the Austrian and Sudeten Germans under the German Flag…The fact is that when Germany was weak, they [the British] partitioned [her] piecemeal. Now that Germany is strong, why should she not strike to unite all Germans and consolidate them into a pan-German State and realise the political dream which generations of German people cherished. ('Speech on India's Foreign Policy', Poona, 3.11.1938 in V. D. Savarkar, Veer Savarkar's Whirlwind Propaganda, A. S. Bhide, Bombay, 1941, page 53.)

In 1939, Savarkar's Hindu Mahasabha celebrated Germany's 'solemn revival of Aryan culture, the glorification of the Swastika, her patronage of Vedic learning, and the ardent championship of the tradition of Indo-Germanic civilisation' (M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's foreign tie-up in the 1930s: archival evidence', Economic & Political Weekly, 22 January 2000, page 224.)

The Nazi newspaper Volkischer Beobachter reported on Savarkar's speeches in exchange for the promotion of Germany's anti-semitic policies in India (C. Jaffrelot, The Hindu Nationalist Movement in Indian Politics, Hurst, London, 1996, pages 51-52). This resulted in Savarkar receiving a copy of Mein Kampf from Germany (M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's foreign tie-up in the 1930s: archival evidence', Economic & Political Weekly, 22 January 2000, page 224.)

B. S. MOONJE, K. B. HEDGEWAR, RSS FOUNDERS

British reports had highlighted that from 1927, B. S. Moonje, an RSS co-founder was inspired to model the RSS on Fascist and Nazi movements (M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's foreign tie-up in the 1930s: archival evidence', Economic & Political Weekly, 22 January 2000.)

In 1931, Moonje visited Fascist Italy and met with Mussolini, by whom he was extremely impressed. Of the Fascist Balilla movement, which organized military training and fascist indoctrination of young boys, Moonje said: The Balilla institutions and the conception of the whole organization have appealed to me the most…The whole organization is conceived by Mussolini for the military regeneration of Italy, Italians, by nature, appear ease-loving and non-martial, like the Indians generally.

They have cultivated, like Indians, the work of peace and neglected the cultivation of the art of war. Mussolini saw the essential weakness of his country and conceived the idea of the Balilla organization…India and particularly Hindu India need some such institution for the military regeneration of the Hindus…Our institution, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh of Nagpur under Dr Hedgewar is of this kind, though quite independently conceived. I shall spend the rest of my life developing and extending this institution of Dr Hedgewar all throughout Maharashtra and other provinces. (Moonje quoted in M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's foreign tie-up in the 1930s: archival evidence', Economic & Political Weekly, 22 January 2000, page 220.)

The Italy visit inspired Moonje to promote these ideas among Hindus in Maharashtra and begin the organization of Hindu youth movements based on this fascist model. This included a conference on Fascism and Mussolini's political thought in 1934, presided by RSS founder K. B. Hedgewar and at which Moonje spoke. (M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's foreign tie-up in the 1930s: archival evidence', Economic & Political Weekly, 22 January 2000.)

…unless we have our own swaraj with a Hindu as a dictator like Shivaji of old or Mussolini or Hitler of present day Italy and Germany…But this does not mean that we have to sit with folded hands until some such dictator arises in India. We should formulate a scientific scheme and carry on propaganda for it. (Moonje quoted in M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's foreign tie-up in the 1930s: archival evidence', Economic & Political Weekly, 22 January 2000, page 221.)

M. S. GOLWALKAR, RSS SECOND SUPREME LEADER

It is superfluous to emphasise the importance of Racial Unity in the Nation state. A Race is a hereditary Society having common customs, common language, common memories of glory and disaster; in short it is a population with a common origin under one culture. Such a race is by far the most important ingredient of a Nation…We will not seek to prove this axiomatic truth, that the Race is the body of the Nation, and that with its fall, the Nation ceases to exist. (Madhav Golwalkar, second RSS supreme leader, in We, or our nationhood defined, Bharat Publications, Nagpur, [1939] 1944, page 21.)

…in Hindusthan exists and must needs exist the ancient Hindu nation and nought else but the Hindu Nation. All those not belonging to the national i.e. Hindu Race, Religion, Culture and Language, naturally fall out of the pale of real 'National' life…All others posing to be patriots and wilfully indulging in a course of action detrimental to the Hindu Nation are traitors and enemies to the National Cause…all those who fall outside the five-fold limits of that idea can have no place in the national life, unless they abandon their differences, and completely merge themselves in the National Race. So long, however, as they maintain their racial, religious and cultural differences, they cannot but be only foreigners, who may either be friendly or inimical to the Nation. (Madhav Golwalkar, second RSS supreme leader, in We, or our nationhood defined, Bharat Publications, Nagpur, [1939] 1944, pages 45-6.)

For Golwalkar, no minority was deserving of any 'right what-so-ever' or 'any obligations from the National race'. Minorities could: live only as outsiders, bound by all the codes and conventions of the Nation, at the sufferance of the Nation and deserving of no special protection, far less any privilege or rights. There are only two courses open to the foreign elements, either to merge themselves in the national race and adopt its culture, or to live at the sweet will of the national race. That is the only logical and correct solution. That alone keeps the national

life healthy and undisturbed. That alone keeps the Nation safe from the danger of a cancer developing into its body politic of the creation of a state within a state. From this standpoint, sanctioned [by] the experiences of shrewd old nations, the non-Hindu peoples of Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture i.e. they must not only give up their attitude of intolerance and ungratefulness towards this land and its age-long traditions but must also cultivate a positive attitude of love and devotion instead - in a word they must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment - not even citizen's rights. We are an old nation; and let us deal as old nations ought to and do deal with the foreign races who have chosen to live in our country. (Madhav Golwalkar, second RSS supreme leader, in We, or our nationhood defined, Bharat Publications, Nagpur, [1939] 1944, pages 48-9.)

German race pride has now become the topic of the day. To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the semitic Races - the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has shown how well nigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by. (Madhav Golwalkar, second RSS supreme leader, in We, or our nationhood defined, Bharat Publications, Nagpur, [1939] 1944, page 37.)

INDIAN NATIONALISM

Indian Nationalism describes the many underlying forces that moulded the Indian independence movement, and strongly continue to influence the politics of India, as well as being the heart of many contrasting ideologies that have caused ethnic and religious conflict in Indian society. It should be noted that

Indian nationalism often imbibes the consciousness of Indians that prior to 1947, India embodied the broader Indian subcontinent and influenced a part of Asia, known as Greater India.

National consciousness in India

India has been unified under many emperors and governments in history. Ancient texts mention India under emperor Bharata and Akhand Bharat, these regions roughly form the entities of modern day greater India and Indosphere. Ashokan India began from the eastern heart of modern India, stretched into modern Bangladesh, Pakistan and beyond, into Afghanistan. In addition, India has also been unified under a central government by empires, such as the Mughal empire and the British Raj.

Conception of Nationhood

India's concept of nationhood is based not merely on territorial extent of its sovereignty. Nationalistic sentiments and expression encompass India's ancient history, as the birthplace of the Indus Valley Civilization, and of four major world religions - Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Indian nationalists see India stretching along these lines across the Indian subcontinent.

India today celebrates many kings and queens for combating foreign invasion and domination[citation needed], such as Shivaji of the Maratha Empire, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi, Kittur Chennamma, Maharana Pratap of Rajputana, Prithviraj Chauhan, who combated the Mahmud of Ghazni and Tipu Sultan who fought the British. The kings of ancient India, such as Chandragupta Maurya and Emperor Ashoka of the Magadha Empire, are also remembered for their military genius, incredible conquests and remarkable religious tolerance.

Muslim kings are also a part of Indian pride. Akbar was a powerful Mughal emperor who sought to resolve religious differences, and was known to have a good relationship with the Roman Catholic Church as well as with his subjects - Hindus, Buddhists Sikhs and Jains. He forged familial and political bonds with Hindu Rajput kings. Although previous Sultans had been more or less tolerant, Akbar took religious intermingling to new level of exploration. He developed for the first time in Islamic India an environment of complete religious freedom. Akbar undid most forms of religious discrimination, and invited the participation of wise Hindu ministers and kings, and even religious scholars to debate in his court.

Swaraj

The flag adopted in 1931 by the Congress and used by the Provisional Government of Free India during the Second World War.

In the Indian rebellion of 1857, Indian soldiers and regional kings fought the forces allied with the British Empire in different parts of India. This event laid the foundation not only for a nationwide expression, but also future nationalism and conflict on religious and ethnic terms[citation needed].

The Indian desire for complete freedom, or Swaraj, was born with Bal Gangadhar Tilak, whose followers were the first to express the desire for complete independence, an idea that did not catch on until after World War I. When the Amritsar Massacre of hundreds of unarmed and innocent civilians by British forces took place in the same year, the Indian public was outraged and most of India's political leaders turned against the British.

The Gandhian Era

Mohandas Gandhi pioneered the art of Satyagraha, typified with a strict adherence to ahimsa (non-violence), and civil disobedience. This permitted common individuals to engage the British in revolution, without employing violence or other distasteful means. Gandhi's equally strict adherence to democracy, religious and ethnic equality and brotherhood, as

well as activist rejection of caste-based discrimination and untouchability united people across these demographic lines for the first time in India's history. The masses could participate in India's freedom struggle for the first time, and the membership of the Congress grew over tens of millions by the 1930s. In addition, Gandhi's victories in the Champaran and Kheda Satyagraha in 1918-19, gave confidence to a rising younger generation of Indians that the British hegemony could be defeated. National leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, Mohandas Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad and Badshah Khan brought together generations of Indians across regions and demographics, and provided a strong leadership base giving the country political direction.

More than Just "Indian"

Indian nationalism is as much a diverse blend of nationalistic sentiments as its people are ethnically and religiously diverse. Thus the most influential undercurrents are more than just Indian in nature. The most controversial and emotionally-charged fiber in the fabric of Indian nationalism is religion. Religion forms a major, and in many cases, the central element of Indian life. Ethnic communities are diverse in terms of linguistics, social traditions and history across India.

HINDU RASHTRA

K.B.Hedgewar was the founder of the RSS, the largest public organization in India and the foundation of Hindu nationalism.

An important influence upon Hindu consciousness arises from the time of Islamic empires in India, during which many Hindu temples were destroyed and Hindus forcibly converted to Islam, and thousands killed by Muslim invaders. Entering the 20th century, Hindus formed over 75% of the population and thus unsurprisingly the backbone and platform of the nationalist movement. Modern Hindu thinking desired to unite Hindu society across the boundaries of caste, lingustic groups and

ethnicity. In 1925, K.B. Hedgewar founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in Nagpur, Maharashtra, which grew into the largest civil organization in the country, and more potent, mainstream base of Hindu nationalism.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar coined the term Hindutva for his ideology that described India as a Hindu Rashtra, a Hindu nation. This ideology has become the cornerstone of the political and religious agendas of modern Hindu nationalist bodies like the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Hindutva political demands include revoking Article 370 of the Constitution that grants a special semi-autonomous status to the Muslim-majority state of Kashmir, adopting a uniform civil code, thus ending a special legal framework for Muslims. These particular demands are based upon ending laws that Hindu nationalists consider as offering special treatment to Muslims. Demands like banning cow slaughter and building a Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya.

The Qaum

In 1906-1907, the All India Muslim League was founded, created due to the suspicion of Muslim intellectuals and religious leaders with the Indian National Congress, which was perceived as dominated by Hindu membership and opinions. However, Mahatma Gandhi's leadership attracted a wide array of Muslims to the freedom struggle and the Congress Party. The Aligarh Muslim University and the Jamia Millia Islamia stand apart - the former was averse to the freedom struggle, while the JMI was founded to promote Muslim education and consciousness upon nationalistic and Gandhian values and thought.

While prominent Muslims like Allama Iqbal and Muhammad Ali Jinnah embraced the notion that Hindus and Muslims were distinct nations, other major leaders like Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, Maulana Azad, Badshah Khan, Hakim Ajmal Khan strongly backed the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian freedom struggle, opposing any notion of Muslim separatism.

This school of Muslim nationalism did not enjoy much support in the provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and Bengal, where the Muslim League enjoyed extensive political power, and where Pakistan was ultimately formed. Zakir Hussain, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and A.P.J. Abdul Kalam were all Muslims, and holders of the Presidency of the Republic. Actors Shah Rukh Khan, Naseeruddin Shah, Aamir Khan, music legends Zakir Hussain, Amjad Ali Khan and cricketers Syed Kirmani,Irfan Pathan,Zaheer Khan, Mushtaq Ali and Mohammad Azharuddin are icons to the Indian public.

Nationalism and Politics

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi led India to victory in 1971 against Pakistan, imposed the Indian Emergency, led it to become a nuclear power state in 1974 and is blamed for the Khalistan insurgency and Operation Bluestar - a controversial blend of nationalism and hard politics.

The political identity of the Indian National Congress, India's largest political party and one which controlled government for over 45 years, is reliant on the connection to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, and the Nehru-Gandhi family which has controlled the Congress since independence. The Congress Party's fortunes up till the 1970s were single-handedly propelled by its legacy as the flagship of India's Independence Movement, and the core platform of the party today evokes that past strongly, considering itself to be the guardian of India's freedom, democracy and unity. Muslims have remained loyal voters of the Congress Party, seen as defender of Nehruvian secularism. Small religious parties have arisen, and Muslim frustrations with communal violence and the aggressive attitudes of Hindu nationalists might lead to the development of a party solely on Islamic religious lines. In contrast, the Bharatiya Janata Party employs a more aggressively nationalistic expression. The BJP seeks to defend the culture and heritage of India and the majority of its people, the Hindu population. It ties nationalism with the aggressive defence of India's borders and interests against archrivals China and Pakistan, with the defence of the majority's right to be a majority.

Ethnic nationalist parties include the Shiromani Akali Dal, which is closely identified with the creation of a Sikh-majority state in Punjab and includes many Sikh religious leaders in its organization. In Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena uses the legacy of the independent Maratha kingdom under heroes like Shivaji to stir up support, and has adopted Hindutva as well. In Assam, the Asom Gana Parishad is a more state-focused party, arising after the frustration of the ULFA as a benevolent expression of Assamese nationalism. In Tamil Nadu came the first of such parties, the DMK. Today the DMK stands for a collection of parties[citation needed], with the DMK, the AIADMK, the PMK and the MDMK. Caste-based politics invite the participation of the Bahujan Samaj Party and the party of Laloo Prasad Yadav, who build upon the support of poor low-caste and dalit Hindus in the northern, and most populated states of India like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Almost every Indian state has a regional party devoted solely to the culture of the native people.

SMASH THE HEAD OF RSS SNAKE!

Time and again we are repeatedly exposing the fascist nature of RSS. Right from the beginning of Hinduthva politics expressed and materialized it's strong desires to militarize the so-called Hindu society. The organizational structure of RSS reveals their hidden agenda. The basic units RSS - which is popularly called 'Shakas' (Cell) - functions as a den to practice deadly martial arts. It is no wonder that these trained resources would be diverted towards non-hindus and the secular democratic forces.

Here is a brief look on the basics of formulation of hinduthva organizations. When Hedgewar started RSS, he had a deep desire to establish a Peshwa raj and to bring back the glorious past of Chitbavan Brahmins. But he had little vague idea about the path to achieve this goal. Here comes Dr.Moonje, who was involved with Savarkar in framing out the hinduthva ideology and latter

joined hands with K.B.Hedgewar in his venture. He actually played the crucial role as a Mentor to K.B Hedgewar.

Moonje had strong links with Italian fascist leaders and he has visited Italy during Mussolini's period. And in fact he was the first Hindu Nationalist leader who came in to contact with Fascist regime of Italy and its leader. In the mid of 1931, Moonje made a trip to Italy and there he visited some important military schools and educational inistitutions. He has documented this visit and the important meeting with Mussolini in his diary. (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), Moonje papers, microfilm, rn 1).

Moonje has derived the methodology and modus operandi for the functions of RSS from this Italy visit. The institutions he visited are - The military college of Rome, The Central Military School of Physical Education, the Fascist Academy of Physical Education, and, most important, the Balilla and Avanguardisti organisations. These two organisations, which he describes in more than two pages of his diary, were the keystone of the fascist system of indoctrination - rather than education - of the youths. Their structure is strikingly similar to that of the RSS. They recruited boys from the age of six, up to 18: the youths had to attend weekly meetings, where they practised physical exercises, received paramilitary training and performed drills and parades. Here are the words from Moonje's diary after witnessing Balilla Organization,

"The Balilla institutions and the conception of the whole organisation have appealed to me most, though there is still not discipline and organisation of high order. The whole idea is conceived by Mussolini for the military regeneration of Italy. Italians, by nature, appear ease-loving and non-martial like the Indians generally. They have cultivated, like Indians, the work of peace and neglected the cultivation of the art of war. Mussolini saw the essential weakness of his country and conceived the idea of the Balilla organisation...Nothing better could have been conceived for the military organisation of Italy...The idea of fascism vividly brings out the conception of unity amongst people...India and particularly Hindu India need some such institution for the military regeneration of the Hindus: so that the artificial distinction so much emphasised by the British of martial and non-martial classes amongst the Hindus may disappear. Our institution of Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh of Nagpur under Dr Hedgewar is of this kind, though quite independently conceived. I will spend the rest of my life in developing and extending this Institution of Dr Hedgewar all throughout the Maharashtra and other provinces."

He continues describing drills and uniforms:

"I was charmed to see boys and girls well dressed in their naval and military uniforms undergoing simple exercises of physical training and forms of drill."

In the above quote, you can replace the word "Hindus" with "Bramins & Bhaniyas", which will make the meaning in true sense.

And in the same day he has met the dictator of Italy and has had an important discussion. This meeting is well documented in Moonje's diary..

When Mussolini enquired about the functions of Balilla organization and Fascist organization, Moonje replied as,

"Your Excellency, I am much impressed. Every aspiring and growing Nation needs such organisations. India needs them most for her military regeneration. During the British Domination of the last 150 years Indians have been waved away from the military profession but India now desires to prepare herself for undertaking the responsibility for her own defence and I am working for it. I have already started an organisation of my own, conceived independently with similar objectives. I shall have no hesitation to raise my voice from the public platform both in India and England when occasion may arise in praise of your Balilla and Fascist organisations. I wish them good luck and every success"

Back in India, he wasted no time to start his vicious activity of militarizing the 'Hindu' society. He gave an interview to "The Maratta", a marathi news papper, where in he said,

> *"In fact, leaders should imitate the youth movement of Germany and the Balilla and Fascist organisations of Italy. I think they are eminently suited for introduction in India, adapting them to suit the special conditions. I have been very much impressed by these movements and I have seen their activities with my own eyes in all details"*

In lines with his mentor, Hedgewar soon became a promoter of campaign in favor of militarizing the 'Hindu' society. On January 31st 1934, Hedgewar headed a conference on Fascism, where Moonje and Kavde Shastri gave the concluding speech. A few months latter Hedgewar had a meeting with Moonje about restructuring the organization in lines with Italian Fascist Organizations.

A document - which is written by Moonje and was circulated among the supporters -recovered from RSS circle of those years says,

> *"This training is meant for qualifying and fitting our boys for the game of killing masses of men with the ambition of winning victory with the best possible casualties (sic) of dead and wounded while causing the utmost possible to the adversary"*

He has not elaborated the word "adversary". But one should understand that RSS has never had a plan to fight British rule or to participate in the freedom struggle. They were very keen to establish the Peshwa raj when British leaves the country and were constructing the basement - the foot soldiers - for that purpose. We should understand that these trained resources are meant to eliminate those who against the Hindhu nationality, that is the Brahmanic nationality, in the future.

Today we hear the shouts from bourgeoisies' mediae & pseudo-communist parties that the decline of Hinduthva forces

has started after the recent defeats in the elections. But they close their eyes on the slow and steady growth and influence of closely knitted secret network in all walks of life. There is a old saying in Tamil, "To kill a snake - smash the head". Here, the head is live and the strength of poison intensifies.

Shri Madhukar Dattatreya, alias Balasaheb Deoras, will be remembered for ever as an epitome of patience and perseverance. He had imbibed these outstanding qualities from Dr K.B. Hedgewar, the founder of the RSS. Hence Shri Guruji used to introduce him as an image of Dr Hedgewar. While paying homage to Balasaheb, who breathed his last on June 17, services of his two illustrious predecessors Doctorji and Guruji naturally come to the mind and one is pleasantly surprised to note the continuity in the style of functioning and the common ideological approach of all the three luminaries, who shaped and moulded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh into a unique worldwide organisation of Hindus.

The all important aspect of continuity, referred to above, is an assuring factor for all those who are ceaselessly striving to consolidate Hindu society. The credit naturally goes to Dr Hedgewar, who scrupulously avoided the danger of a personality cult in developing his organisation.

Shri Guruji, though himself a genius followed Dr Hedgewar's style and never allowed a personality cult to develop even sub-consciously. The third Sarsanghchalak Balasaheb, who was almost cast in the image of Dr Hedgewar not only worked with the same spirit but summed up Dr Hedgewar's thinking in his characterically measured words while paying homage to Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya. Balasaheb recalled how Doctorji impressed on the Sangh workers that an ideal swayamsevak would not allow himself to be indispensable. An ideal swayamsevak is one in whose absence the work progresses as usual. Thus while acclaiming Deendayalji as an ideal swayamsevak Balasaheb indirectly divulged the secret of his success in fulfilling the cherished goal. Swatantryaveer Savarkar

who had noticed this inimitable spirit of the Sangh's style of functioning, aptly summed up in his condolence message : "Dr Hedgewar, founder of the RSS, is dead. Long live the RSS." How aptly it applies to Balasaheb! "Deoras is dead", "Long live the RSS".

Shri Guruji, the second Sarsanghchalak, while assuming the highest office had humbly remarked that he would be occupying veritably a throne of Vikramaditya, thus hinting that in his new capacity he will be guided and blessed by his illustrious predecessor. Similarly, when Balasaheb assumed the highest office he too paid glowing tributes to the devoted band of Sangh workers, trained and moulded by his predecessors saying that the devoted team of workers could even be the envy of the gods.

Thus, while seeking the co-oration of all senior workers, Balasaheb began his innings on a wicket of perfect understanding with his co-workers. He stressed the need for perfect understanding. In order to sow the seed of unity and social assimilation he opened his account by garlanding the newly-erected statue of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule in Nagpur. Mahatma Phule was one of the foremost social reformers in the country, who mainly worked in Maharashtra. On May 8, 1974, Balasaheb delivered a public lecture in Pune under the auspices of the historic Spring Lecture Series (Vasant Vyakhayanmala). In this memorable speech Balasaheb forcefully advocated social transformation of Hindu society. He also vehemently denounced untouchability. Quoting Dr Hedgewar that the RSS neither believed in untouchability nor practiced it, he maintained that the outdated custom must go lock, stock and barrel.

Emphasising the need for equality and oneness in society, Balasaheb snatched the earliest opportunity to elaborate his ideas. Addressing the Vijayadashami utsav in Nagpur, he commanded the setting up of a human rights commission which was doing very useful work in many foreign countries. Obviously he wanted every citizen to be able to approach such a commission to seek redressal of their grievances. With such an effective body taking

up cudgels on behalf of all aggrieved parties there would be no need for setting up a minorities commission. Balasaheb's positive approach to the vexed problem was, however, not acceptable to the politicians, who preferred to be guided by political expediency. Despite their unwillingness because of their obsession with vote- gathedng, Balasaheb pursued the idea relentlessly. It became evident when Shri Deoras opposed tooth and nail the setting up of a minorities commission during the Janata regime under Morarji Desai.

Shri Bhau Saheb Ubale of Nagpur settled in Canada was appointed human rights commissioner by the Canadian Government and his experience of Canada's human rights commission's functioning was utilised to a great deal by Balasaheb in formulating his ideas about the urgency of setting up a human rights commission in Bharat, which would do away with the minority-majority syndrome in Indian politics. The Bharatiya Janata Party in due course incorporated the demand for a human rights commission in their national agenda and furthermore took the initiative in setting up such commissions in some of the States ruled by the BJP.

The onward march of the Sangh and the natural evolution of its style of functioning evoked interest among leaders of society. Many of them, therefore, desired to co- operate with the Sangh. Even Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, founder-president of Bharatiya Jana Sangh sought more swayamsevaks like Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya. Dr Mookerjee once remarked : "Give me two or three workers like Deendayalji and I will change the face of Indian politics." When this trend in the post-independence period grew more and more Sangh workers were being requisitioned for different fields of social service. There was, no doubt, some turbulence in the minds of senior workers. For them it was a trying time. This phase, however, ended with the benign guidance of Shri Guruji. Balasaheb assisted him in this task with his characteristic patience and perseverance. He would maintain stoic silence and yet direct his colleagues by his

disciplined behaviour. He never allowed the latent turbulence in his mind to overcome his outward behaviour. He demonstrated the correct and disciplined conduct of an ideal swayamsevak.

After the turbulent phase was over it became obvious to many outsiders as well as insiders how Balasaheb functioned as a complement to Guruji. For insiders, it was no surprise because the two of them had worked together for about two decades. Dr Hedgewar had sent Guruji to Calcutta (1939) as a pracharak and later sent Balasaheb also to assist him.

Thus, both of them proved mutually complementary. This co-operation and fusion of two great devoted workers was the natural outcome of complete devotion to the cause, which was life's mission for both of them. This type of perfect rapport prompted Balasaheb to remark : Under Guruji i was managing the organisational affairs. For this part Guruji introduced Balasaheb with the remark that those who did not have the privilege of seeing Dr Hedgewar should look at Balasaheb Deoras, who is cast in the mould of Dr Hedgewar. Guruji let everyone see by his actions that he sincerely looked upon Balasaheb as Doctorji in new form. It is a very happy coincidence that Guruji had the privilege of attending on Dr Hedgewar when the latter was recouping in Deolali (near Nashik) after his serious illness. Similarly, he attended on Balasaheb also when the latter was recuperating at the fag end of the turbulent days mentioned above. All this, when viewed in the proper perspective, shows how both of them functioned as complementary of each other.

The finest hour in Balasaheb's career dawned when during the 19 months of the Emergency, he guided the nationwide movement launched to overthrow the tyranny unleashed by the then dictatorial prime minister and her minions. Even the highest political leadership was unnerved and found themselves helpless. Balasaheb, who was lodged in the Yervada Jail (near Pune) guided his colleagues and thus maintained the morale of the underground workers carrying on the campaign to overthrow the tyrannical regime. At last the Emergency was lifted and

there was spontaneous response from all sections of society, greeting and congratulating Balasaheb for his most successful leadership of the movement.

Along with the declaration of the Emergency, Government of India had abolished the Press Council alleging that the Council was not functioning properly and was encouraging anti-India stance. After the lifting of the Emergency the then chairman of the Press Council of India, Justice (Retd.) Shri Rajagopal Ayyangar, was very happy and was eager to call on Balasaheb to felicitate him for his able leadership.

Overwhelmed by the course of events, culminating in the withdrawal of the Emergency, Justice Ayyangar celebrated the Day of Deliverance in one of the temples in Delhi's Ramakrishna Puram. Moreover, he took the initiative to visit Keshav Kunj, the RSS headquarters in Delhi, to felicitate Shri Deoras. This is a typical response from society at large. Many more could be cited from different parts of the country, equally spontaneous and equally eloquent.

RSS is planning to celebrate birth centenary of the second RSS chief Madhavrao Sadashivrao Golwalkar. While K. B. Hedgewar is responsible for setting up RSS and the initial leadership, it was the genius of Golwalkar that firmly established RSS in the Indian political scene. It was he who developed most of the strategies that are still in use by RSS. He gave RSS the vision that still inspires its cadre.

Therefore to understand RSS it is important to understand Golwalkar and his teachings. Golwalkar was born in 1906 near Nagpur. He entered Banaras Hindu University in 1906, got his B.Sc. degree in 1926, M.Sc. in Zoology in 1928. He joined BHU as a teacher and worked there till 1933. Golwalkar was very apolitical in his student life; the only political activity before he joined RSS in 1931 was to meet Hedgewar in 1929. Exactly what led him to get involved in politics to such a degree in a short span of two years, to resign from his job and move to Nagpur, is a mystery.

Hedgewar worked on his new disciple to train him for a future leadership role. Meanwhile, Golwalkar got himself enrolled into Nagpur University to study law, getting his LLB degree in 1935. Probably the militaristic routine of RSS was unable to satisfy the intellectual and spiritual need of Golwalkar, in 1937 we find him leaving RSS to move to Bengal and become a disciple of Swami Akhandana at Sargachi. Just a few months later, Swami dies, and a confused Golwalkar goes back to Hedgewar. He remained attached to his Swami's mission all his life though, he never cut his hair and beard as instructed by the Swami.

Golwalkar accompanied Hedgewar in all his trips to set up shakhas in different places. Golwalkar was trained and his personality built up so that he could become an acceptable leader. In 1938 A book comes out "We or Our Nationhood Defined." It was supposed to be written by Golwalkar, and was a clear attempt to raise his profile. Later Golwalkar himself admitted that it was an abridged translation of another book in Marathi.

During Hedgewar's final days, when he was too sick to travel, it was Golwalkar who took care of business associated with RSS, and took complete charge of the organization. Therefore, it is not surprising that in 1940, bypassing some senior leaders who were with RSS since the beginning, Golwalkar was made head of RSS.

Golwalkar is the longest serving chief of RSS and also may be the most successful in terms of increasing membership and establishing shakhas. Hedgewar left RSS with about 50 shakhas and 100,000 members and when Golwalkar died he had expanded its reach to 10,000 shakhas and membership running above a million.

RSS under Hedgewar was resigned to its status of a junior member of the Hindu Right, playing second fiddle to Hindu Mahasabha. Mahasabha leaders didn't treat them as much more than a youth organizer with no mass movement or vision for the future. In fact, V. D. Savarkar commented that "the epitaph

for the RSS volunteer will be that he was born, he joined the RSS and he died without accomplishing anything."

Hedgewar developed his organization as a street-fighting machine; cadres were well trained to fight the "enemy" and enhance passions by the disinformation campaign. RSS continues to be a master of the rumor industry, but inspite of their emphasis on physical training, there is little evidence that RSS members get involved in actual physical fights. Lower caste communities are utilized to do the dirty work of rioting once they have been initiated. The credit for this transformation goes to Hedgewar.

Soon after taking over RSS, Hedgewar tried to make it a separate identity from Hindu Mahsabha. The RSS as a result became more anti-Socialist than Mahasabha, while maintaining its anti-Muslim stance. This expanded its social base to include all the people who lose from any radical social change. That increased its membership as well as giving it financial security. While most of India was revolting in a peaceful way against the British occupation, RSS chose a non-confrontational approach. For them being patriotic had nothing to do with being anti-British.

In his book "Bunch of Thoughts," Golwalkar writes that "the theories of territorial nationalism and of common danger, which formed the basis for our concept of nation, had deprived us of the positive and inspiring content of our real Hindu Nationhood and made many of the 'freedom movements' virtually anti-British movements. Anti-Britishism was equated with patriotism and nationalism. This reactionary view has had disastrous effects upon the entire course of the freedom movement, its leaders and the common people." It is really ironic that this is the same organization that now treats Subhash Chandra Bose as a patriot who was clearly anti-British in his approach and did not mind taking the assistance of Germany and Japan to fight the common enemy.

RSS these days have turned anti-Christian but they were never anti-British, in fact RSS tried to channelize the nation's

anti-British feelings into anti-Muslim sentiments. The youthful energy of the members was kept busy by occasional clashes with the Muslims. The British Government must have been happy that scores of youth were kept out of the freedom movement.

It is possible that RSS was hand-in-glove with the British Government in their plan to keep their cadre outside the freedom movement. We find that RSS accepted all the restrictions placed on it by the government of the time. The khaki shirt was replaced by the white shirt because it was similar to the military uniform; canvas shoes replaced leather boots and the belt was dropped altogether. RSS preferred Anti-Muslim sentiments in place of Anti-British.

While the Indian leadership was in prison because of the quit Indian Movement, RSS laid the foundation stone of Hedgewar Bhawan in 1945. It was completed in less than a year's time. Its compound is big enough to hold an assembly of 9000 RSS men. This lavish construction comes on the heel of the Bengal famine, for which RSS, a voluntary organization, was not involved in helping the people. In fact RSS did nothing to stop the partition of 'Akhand Bharat', which puts them in the same group with the Muslim League, as the group who favored the two-nation theory.

It is difficult to imagine what was going through the mind of Golwalkar at that tumultuous time in Indian history; it must have taken a lot of effort not to be active. Nathuram Godse, who used to accompany Hedgewar in his travels, killed Mahatma Gandhi. The ban on RSS was a difficult time on its organizational history, it exposed the weakness of the Organization, and all this time the emphasis was on physical exercise and creating an army of clones. RSS found little support in its effort to revoke the ban. It was able to gather only nine lakh signatures to petition the government.

Failing in its effort to launch a movement against the ban, Golwalkar started to use lobbying to get the ban removed. After coming out of the ban, RSS started infiltrating different sectors

by launching their own organizations (eg. student organizations, trade unions, and farmers unions). About 50 front-organizations were created to cover different sectors of the society. Clashes with China in 1957-59 gave RSS a platform to come out of hibernation. RSS started many campaigns against cow-slaughter, the Urdu language, and formation of the Malappuram District in Kerala etc.

Jawaharlal Nehru was very much against lifting the ban against RSS, but towards the end of his career, Nehru initiated the process of making peace with RSS. Lads of Golwalkar were invited to join Republic day parade in 1963. That was the first and the last time that they were part of the Republic day parade, but it was a nice propaganda tool for RSS.

The atmosphere of the 1965 war with Pakistan was fertile for RSS growth. On the eve of the 1967 election, RSS mobilized the various Hindu organizations to stage a massive anti-cow-slaughter demonstration outside Parliament in November 1966. This movement coupled with Congress' inaction lead to a major defeat for the Congress and many RSS men became ministers in many of the north-Indian states. This brought another chapter for RSS, which enabled them to use state machinery to promote the cause of RSS.

But apparently they grew too fast and were unable to cope with their success. Indira Gandhi's shrewdness and defeat of the Pakistani army in Bangladesh made RSS ineffective. RSS works better under the environment of fear. The strong leadership style of Indira Gandhi confused RSS strategists, and thus the death of Golwalkar in July 1973 left behind a demoralized organization. In spite of this his legacy lives on, directions and strategies that he gave to this organisation are still followed by RSS.

In brief, this was the public life of the second RSS chief Golwalkar. The evil design planted by him continues to give fruit. In this centenary year there will be many articles praising Golwalkar, and as is the style of RSS, they will be re-writing

history to show us how great a leader he was. To understand Golwalkar, we have to cut the hype and simply have to read his words as follows:

On caste system:

"There is nothing to prove that it (the caste system) ever hindered our social developments. Actually caste system has helped to preserve the unity of our society." (Bunch of Thoughts p.108)

"The history proves that Mohammadan could win over North West and north east areas easily where Budhism had shattered the pattern of caste system. Gandhar which is Kandhar now, was converted to Islam completely. But contrary to this, Hindu religion was strong in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh despite Muslim rule because caste system was strictly followed there. (Bunch of Thoughts]

On Nationhood:

"When we say, "This is the Hindu nation", there are some who immediately come up with the question, "What about the Muslims and Christians dwelling in this land? Are they also not born and bred here? How could they become aliens just because they have changed their faith? But the crucial point is whether they remember that they are the children of this soil? …. No. Together with the change in their faith, gone are the spirit of love and devotion for the nation." (Bunch of Thoughts)

Solution to the Minority 'problem':

"The foreign races in Hindustan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture, i.e., of the Hindu nation and must lose their separate existence to merge in the Hindu race, or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu Nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment - not even citizen's rights. There

is, at least, should be, no other course for them to adopt. We are an old nation; let us deal, as old nations ought to and do deal, with the foreign races, who have chosen to live in our country. (We or Our Nationhood Defined)

"German race-pride has now become the topic of the day. To keep up with the purity of the race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic races- the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for Races and Cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for use in Hindusthan to learn and profit by."

4

Syama Prasad Mukherjee

Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (July 6, 1901 - June 23, 1953) was a nationalist political leader of India, and is considered the godfather of modern Hindutva and Hindu Nationalism.

Mookerjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the first Hindu nationalist political party of its kind, and was also the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha and closely associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

EARLY LIFE

Mookerjee was born on July 6, 1901 in Calcutta, a major Indian city and capital of Bengal. His father was Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, a well respected advocate in Bengal, who became the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, and his mother was Lady Jogmaya Devi Mookerjee.

Mookerjee obtained his degrees from the University of Calcutta. He graduated in English securing the first position in first class in 1921 and also did MA in 1923 and BL in 1924. He became a fellow of the Senate in 1923.

He enrolled as an advocate in Calcutta High Court in 1924 after his father's death. Subsequently he left for England in 1926 to study in Lincoln's Inn and became a barrister in 1927. At the age of 33, he became the youngest Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta (1934), and held the office till 1938.

POLITICAL CAREER

He was elected as member of the Legislative Council of Bengal, as a Indian National Congress candidate representing Calcutta University but resigned next year when Congress decided to boycott the legislature. Subsequently, he contested the election as an independent candidate and got elected. He was the Finance minister of Bengal Province during 1941-42.

He emerged as a spokesman for Hindus and shortly joined Hindu Mahasabha and in 1944, he became the President. Mookerjee was not anti-Muslim, but a Hindu political leader who felt the need to counteract the communalist and separatist Muslim League of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who were demanding either exaggerated Muslim rights or a Muslim state of Pakistan.

Mookerjee adopted causes to unite Hindu voices, and protect Hindus against what he believed to be the communal propaganda and the divisive agenda of the Muslim League. To Mookerjee, the Muslims were a minority and thus could not in any reasonable system be given a status superior to the majority Hindu masses. Mookerjee and his future followers would always cite inherent Hindu practices of tolerance and communal respect as the reason for a healthy, prosperous and safe Muslim population in the country in the first place.

Mookerjee was initially a strong opponent of the Partition of India, but following the communal riots of 1946-47, in which Muslim mobs killed thousands of Hindus all over Bengal, provoking Hindu retaliation, Mookerjee strongly disfavored Hindus continuing to live in a Muslim-dominated state and under a government controlled by the Muslim League.

Mookerjee supported the partition of Bengal in 1946 to prevent the inclusion of its Hindu-majority areas in a Muslim-dominated East Pakistan; he also opposed a failed bid for a united but independent Bengal made in 1947 by Sarat Bose, the brother of Subhas Chandra Bose and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, a Bengali Muslim politician.

He wanted the Hindu Mahasabha not to be restricted to Hindus alone or work as apolitical body for the service of masses. Following the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by a Hindu fanatic, the Mahasabha was blamed chiefly for the heinous act and became deeply unpopular. Mookerjee himself condemned the murder and left the party.

POST-INDEPENDENCE

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru inducted him in the Interim Central Government as a Minister for Industry and Supply. Mookerjee was widely respected by many Indians and also by members of the Indian National Congress, the main Indian political organization, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, one of its chief leaders.

But on issue of the 1949 Delhi Pact with Pakistani Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan, Mookerjee resigned from the Cabinet on April 6, 1950. Mookerjee was firmly against Nehru's invitation to the Pakistani PM, and their joint pact to establish minority commissions and guarantee minority rights in both countries. He wanted to hold Pakistan directly responsible for the terrible influx of millions of Hindu refugees from East Pakistan, who had left the state fearing religious suppression and violence aided by the state. Mookerjee considered Nehru's actions as appeasement, and was hailed as a hero by the people of West Bengal.[citation needed]

After consultation with Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, leader of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Mookerjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (Indian People's Union) on October 21, 1951 at Delhi and became its first President.

The BJS criticized favoritism to India's Muslims by the Nehru administration, and promoted free-market economics as opposed to the socialism in Nehru's economic and social policies. The BJS also favored a uniform civil code for both Hindus and Muslims, want to ban cow slaughter and end the special status of Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir. The BJS founded the Hindutva

agenda which became the wider political expression of India's Hindu majority.

In the 1952 general elections to the Parliament of India, Mookerjee and the BJS won 3 seats.

Mookerjee went to visit Kashmir in 1953, and went on hunger strike to protest the law prohibiting Indian citizens from settling in a state in their own country and the need to carry ID cards, and was arrested on 11th May while crossing border. Although the ID card rule was revoked owing to his efforts, he died as detenu on May 23, 1953 under mysterious circumstances. His death in custody raised wide suspicion across the country and demands for independent enquiry, including earnest requests from his mother, Jogmaya Devi to the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. Unfortunately no enquiry commission was set up and his death remains a mystery.

LEGACY

Along with Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Mookerjee is considered the godfather of Hindu nationalism in India, especially the Hindutva movement. He is widely revered by members and supporters of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

Mookerjee was a major role model to Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who made the BJS the chief Hindu conservative political party in the 1960s and 1970s, and founded its successor, the Bharatiya Janata Party. The BJP has become one of the two largest national political parties, the other being the Congress Party, and had formed the Government from 1998 to 2004, with Vajpayee serving as the Prime Minister of India.

> *"I have never felt happy about our attitude towards Pakistan. It has been weak, halting and inconsistent. Our goodness or inaction has been interpreted as weakness by Pakistan."*

Excerpts from convocation address by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee at Benares Hindu University (1st December, 1940)

A good deal of confusion prevails today about the ethical doctrine of Ahimsa. There is no doubt Ahimsa is one of the cardinal virtues taught by Indian thinkers of all denominations throughout the ages. Dharma consists in Ahimsa, proclaims the Mahabharat. "Ahimsa confers immortality", declares the Code of Manu. The doctrine of Ahimsa is a necessary corollary to the Hindu belief that the supreme spirit pervades the universe, that everything is strung on the Blessed Lord as rows of gems upon a thread, and that welfare of all beings is a sacred duty. Ahimsa doubtless implies abstention from selfish and aggressive violence. But does it signify inertia and pacifism under all circumstances? Did not Sree Ramchandra, so kind to righteous men and women, including even Nishadas and Savaras, wage a war to punish the arrogant evil-doer who insulted woman-hood and violated the sanctity of the peaceful hermitage?

Were not "Pachajanyasya nirghosho Gandivasya cha nisvanah" meant to strike terror into the hearts of those whose pride and conceit would not allow them to do justice and repair wrongs? Did not Sree Chaitanya roar like Narasimha to restrain the bigot and the oppressor? Did not the great Asoka himself lay as much stress on 'parakrama' (prowess) as on 'ahimsa' and declare in one of his Rock Edicts that there was a limit to his forbearance? "Should any one do him wrong, that must be borne with by His Sacred Majesty so far as it can possibly be borne with". Even Buddhist Theologians prescribed condign punishment for treachery and mischief-making, typified by the career of Devadatta. Readers of the Chachnama need not be told what pusillanimity masquerading as religious quietism may do to endanger the life and liberty of a people and destroy its morale.

If I have understood the history of my country aright, a pacifism that refuses to take up arms against injustice and makes one a passive spectator of oppression and aggression, does not represent the real teaching of India. Let us not forget that valour was greatly esteemed by the sages and free rulers of India in

olden times. When valour languished, the entire polity weakened. When the sword and the book of knowledge kept together, justice, equity and liberty ruled the affairs of the state. We want to see the reappearance of the ancient spirit of valour tempered with a spiritual wisdom consistent with our genius and present needs, which alone can recover civilization out of the chaotic condition of the modern age.

We live in an age when the need of 'parakrama', ceaseless exertion, courage and valour, in all spheres of activity affecting the public weal, is more imperative than ever. The menace of invasion from without is within the bounds of possibility. Disruptive forces are at work within the country itself. A nation can only save itself by its own energy. But energy and strength hardly come to a people that does not enjoy the blessings of unity and freedom. Unity need not imply uniformity is not to be encouraged. India is traditionally a land of village republics, and local autonomy has had many noble champions whose patriotism and public spirit are beyond question. But accentuation of differences can not make for strength. A divided India was always a prey to the foreign invader from the days of Alexander and Mahmud of Ghazni to those of Vasco da Gama, Dupleix and Clive.

There is much disharmony and disunity in India today. Communal differences have taken such an acute turn that fanatic claims for the vivisection of our Motherland are widely asserted, backed by tacit encouragement of the powers that rule the destinies of India today.

Excerpts from statement by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on his resignation as Minister of Industry and Supply (8th April, 1950)

I have never felt happy about our attitude towards Pakistan. It has been weak, halting and inconsistent. Our goodness or inaction has been interpreted as weakness by Pakistan. It has made Pakistan more and more intransigent and has made us suffer all the greater and even lowered us in the estimation of

our own people. On every important occasion we have remained on the defensive and failed to expose or counteract the designs of Pakistan aimed at us. I am not, however, dealing today with general India-Pakistan relationship, for the circumstances that have led to my resignation are primarily concerned with the treatment of minorities in Pakistan, especially in East Bengal. Let me say at once the Bengal problem is not a provincial one. It raises issues of an all-India character and on its proper solution will depend the peace and prosperity, both economic and political, of the entire nation.

There is an important difference in the approach to the problem of minorities in India and Pakistan. The vast majority of Muslims in India wanted the partition of the country on a communal basis, although I gladly recognise there has been a small section of patriotic Muslims who consistently have identified themselves with national interests and suffered for it. The Hindus on the other hand were almost to a man definitely opposed to partition. When the partition of India became inevitable, I played a very large part in creating public opinion in favour of the partition of Bengal, for I felt that if that was not done, the whole of Bengal and also perhaps Assam would fall into Pakistan. At that time little knowing that I would join the first Central Cabinet, I along with others, gave assurances to the Hindus of East Bengal, stating that if they suffered at the hands of the future Pakistan Government, if they were denied elementary rights of citizenship, if their lives and honour were jeopardised or attacked, Free India would not remain an idle spectator and their just cause would be boldly taken up by the Government and people of India.

During the last 2 1/2 years their sufferings have been of a sufficiently tragic character. Today I have no hesitation in acknowledging that in spite f all efforts on my part, I have not been able to redeem by pledge and on this ground alone - if on no other - I have no moral right to be associated with Government any longer. Recent happenings in East Bengal have however

overshadowed all their past woes and humiliation. Let us not forget that the Hindus of East Bengal are entitled to the protection of India, not on humanitarian considerations alone, but by virtue of their sufferings and sacrifices, made cheerfully for generations, not for advancing their own parochial interests, but for laying the foundations of India's political freedom and intellectual progress. It is the united voice of the leaders that are dead and of the youth that smilingly walked upto the gallows for India's cause that calls for justice and fairplay at the hands of Free India of today.

The recent Agreement, to my mind, offers no solution to the basic problem. The evil is far deeper and no patchwork can lead to peace. The establishment of a homogenous Islamic state is Pakistan's creed and a planned extermination of Hindus and Sikhs and expropriation of their properties constitute its settled policy. As a result of this policy, life for the minorities in Pakistan has become "nasty, brutish and short". Let us not be forgetful of the lessons of history. We will do so at our own peril. I am not talking of by-gone times; but if anyone analyses the course of events in Pakistan since its creation, it will be manifest that there is no honourable place for Hindus within that State. The problem is not communal. It is essentially political. The Agreement unfortunately tries to ignore the implications of an Islamic State. But anyone, who refers carefully to the Objectives Resolution passed by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and to the speech of its Prime Minister, will find that while talking in one place of protection of minority rights, the Resolution in another place emphatically declares " that the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and special justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed". The Prime Minister of Pakistan while moving the Resolution thus spoke :

"You would also notice that the State is not to play the part of a neutral observer wherein the Muslims may be merely free to profess and practice their religion, because such an attitude on the part of the State would be the very negation of the ideals

which prompted the demand of Pakistan and it is these ideals which should be the corner stone of the State which we want to build. The State will create such conditions as are conducive to the building up of a truly Islamic Society which means that the State will have to play a positive part in this effort. You would remember that the Quaid-e-Azam and other leaders of the Muslim League always made unequivocal declarations that the Muslim demand for Pakistan was based upon the fact that the Muslims had their own way of life and a code of conduct. Indeed, Islam lays down specific directions for social behaviour and seeks to guide society in its attitude towards the problems which confront it day to day. Islam is not just a matter of private beliefs and conduct."

In such a Society, let me ask in all seriousness, can any Hindu expect to live with any sense of security in respect of his cultural, religious, economic and political rights. Indeed our Prime Minister analysed the basic difference between India and Pakistan only a few weeks ago on the floor of the House and his words will bear repetition.

> *"The people of Pakistan are of the same stock as we are and have the same virtues and failings. But the basic difficulty of the situation is that the policy of a religious and communal State followed by the Pakistan Government ineviitably produces a sense of lack of full citizenship and a continuous insecurity among those who do not belong to the majority community."*

It is not the ideology preached by Pakistan that is the only disturbing factor. Its performances have been in full accord with its ideology and the minorities have had bitter experiences times without number of the true character and functioning of an Islamic State. The Agreement has totally failed to deal with this basic problem.

Public memory is sometimes very short. There is an impression in many quarters that the Agreement recently made is the first great attempt of its kind to solve the problem of

minorities. I am leaving aside for the time being the disaster that took place in the Punjab; in spite of all assurances and undertakings there was a complete collapse of the administration and the problem was solved in a most brutal fashion. Afterwards we saw the gradual extermination of Hindus from North Western Frontier Province and Baluchistan and latterly from Sind as well. In East Bengal about 13 millions of Hindus were squeezed out of East Bengal. There were no major incidents as such; but circumstances so shaped themselves that they got no protection from the Government of Pakistan and were forced to come away to West Bengal for shelter. During that period there was no question of any provocation given by India where normal conditions had settled down; there was no question of Muslims being coerced t go away from India to Pakistan.

In April, 1948, the First Inter-Dominion Agreement was reached in Calcutta, dealing specially with the problems of Bengal. If anyone analyses and compares the provisions of that Agreement with the recent one it will appear that in all essential matters they are similar to each other. This Agreement, however, did not produce any effective result. India generally observed its terms but the exodus from East Bengal continued unabated. It was a one-way traffic, just as Pakistan wished for. There were exchanges of correspondence; there were meetings of officials and Chief Ministers; there were consultations between Dominion Ministers. But judged by actual results Pakistan's attitude continued unchanged. There was a second Inter-Dominion Conference in Delhi, in December, 1948, and another Agreement was signed, sealed and delivered. It dealt with the same problem - the rights of minorities specially in Bengal. This also was a virtual repetition of the first Agreement.

In the course of 1949 we witnessed a further deterioration of conditions in East Bengal and an exodus of a far larger number of helpless people, who were uprooted from their hearth and home and were thrown into India in a most miserable condition. The fact thus remains that inspite of two Inter Dominion

Agreements as many as 16 to 20 lakhs of Hindus were sent away to India from East Bengal. About a million of uprooted Hindus had also to come away from Sind. During this period a large number of Muslims also came away from Pakistan mainly influenced by economic considerations. The economy of West Bengal received a rude shock and we continued as helpless spectators of a grim tragedy.

Today there is a general impression that there has been failure both on the part of India and Pakistan to protect their minorities. The fact however is just the reverse of it. A hostile propaganda has been also carried on in some sections of the foreign press. This is a libel on India and truth must be made known to all who desire to know it.

The Indian Government - both at the Centre and in the Provinces and States - generally maintained peace and security throughout the land after Punjab and Delhi disturbances had quietened down, in spite of grave and persistent provocations from Pakistan by reason of its failure to create conditions in Sind and East Bengal whereby minorities could live there peacefully and honourably. It should not be forgotten here that the people who came away from East Bengal or Sind were not those who had decided to migrate to India out of imaginary fear at the time of partition. These were people who were bent on staying in Pakistan, if only they were given a chance to live decent and peaceful lives.

Towards the end of 1949, fresh events of a violent character started happening in East Bengal. On account of the iron curtain in that area, news did not at first arrive in India. When about 15000 refugees came to West Bengal in January 1950, stories of brutal atrocities and persecutions came to light. This time the attack was directed both against middle class urban people and selected sections of rural people who were strong, virile and united; to strike terror into their hearts was a part of Pakistan's policy. These startling reports led to some repercussions of a comparatively minor character in certain parts of West Bengal.

Although these were checked quickly and effectively, false and highly exaggerated reports of so-called occurrences in West Bengal were circulated in many parts of East Bengal.

This was clearly done with official backing and with a sinister motive. In the course of two to three weeks events of a most tragic character, which no civilized Government could ever tolerate, almost simultaneously broke out in numerous parts of East Bengal, causing not only wanton loss of lives and properties, but resulting also in forcible conversion of a large number of helpless people, abduction of women and shocking outrages on them. Reports which have now reached our hands clearly indicate that all these could not have happened as stray sporadic incidents. They formed part of a deliberate and cold planning to exterminate minorities from East Bengal; to ignore this is to forget hard realities. During that period our publicity both here and abroad became hopelessly weak and ineffective. This was partly done in order to prevent repercussions within India. Pakistan however followed exactly the opposite course of action.

The result was that we were dubbed as aggressors while the truth was the reverse of it. During these critical weeks - although there were people who were swayed by passions and prejudices - vast sections of India's population were prepared to leave matters in the hands of Government and expected it to take stubborn measures to check the brutalities perpetrated in Pakistan. At that hour of crisis we failed to rise equal to the occasion. Where days - if not hours - counted, we allowed weeks to go by and we could not decide what was the right course of action.

The whole nation was in agony and expected promptness and firmness, but we followed a policy of drift and indecision. The result was that in some areas of West Bengal and other parts of India, people became restive and exasperated and took the law into their own hands. Let me say without hesitation that private retaliation on innocent people in India for brutalities committed in Pakistan offers us no remedy whatsoever.

It creates a vicious circle which may be worse than the disease; it brutalizes the race and lets loose forces which may become difficult to control at a later stage. We must function as a civilised State and all citizens who are loyal to the State must have equal rights and protection, irrespective of their religion or faith. The only effective remedy in a moment of such national crisis can and must be taken by the Government of the country and if Government moves quickly, consistent with the legitimate wishes of the people and with a full sense of national honour and prestige, there is not the least doubt that the people will stand behind the government. In any case, Government acted promptly to re-establish peace and order throughout India. Meanwhile Muslims, though in much lesser numbers, had also started leaving India, a good number of whom belonged to East Bengal and had come to West Bengal for service or occupation.

Pakistan realised the gravity of the situation only when it found that on this occasion, unlike previous ones, there was no question of one-way traffic. Since January last at least 10 lakhs of people have come out of East Bengal to West Bengal. Several lakhs have gone to Tripura and Assam. Reports indicate that thousands are on their march to India today and they represent all classes and communities of people.

The supreme question of the hour is, can the minorities continue to live with any sense of security in Pakistan? The test of any Agreement is not its reaction within India or in foreign lands, but on the minds of the unfortunate minorities living in Pakistan or those who have been forced to come away already. It is not how a few top-ranking individuals in Pakistan think or desire to act. It is the entire set-up of that State, the mentality of the official circles - high and low - the attitude of the people at large and the activities of organisations such as 'Ansars' which all operate together and make it impossible for Hindus to live. It may be that for some months no major occurrences may take place. Meanwhile we may on our generosity supply them with essential commodities which will give them added strength.

That has been Pakistan's technique. Perhaps the next attack may come during the rainy season when communications are virtually cut off.

I have found myself unable to be party to the Agreement for the following main reasons:

First - we had two such Agreements since Partition for solving the Bengal problem and they were violated by Pakistan without any remedy open to us. Any Agreement which has no sanction will not offer any solution.

Secondly - the crux of the problem is Pakistan's concept of an Islamic State and the ultra-communal administration based on it. The Agreement side-tracks this cardinal issue and we are today exactly where we were previous to the Agreement.

Thirdly - India and Pakistan are made to appear equally guilty, while Pakistan was clearly the aggressor. The Agreement provides that no propaganda will be permitted against the territorial integrity of the two countries and there will be no incitement to war between them. This almost sounds farcical so long as Pakistan troops occupy a portion of our territory of Kashmir and warlike preparations on its part are in active operation.

Fourthly - events have proved that Hindus cannot live in East Bengal on the assurances of security given by Pakistan. We should accept this as a basic proposition. The present Agreement on the other hand calls upon minorities to look upon Pakistan Government for their safety and honour which is adding insult to injury and is contrary to assurances given by us previously.

Fifthly - there is no proposal to compensate those who have suffered nor will the guilty be ever punished, because no one will dare give evidence before a Pakistan Court. This is in accordance with bitter experience in the past.

Sixthly - Hindus will continue to come away in large numbers and those who have come will not be prepared to go back. On

the other hand, Muslims who had gone away will now return and in our determination to implement the Agreement Muslims will not leave India. Our economy will thus be shattered and possible conflict within our country will be greater.

Seventhly - in the garb of protecting minorities in India, the Agreement has reopened the problem of Muslim minority in India, thus seeking to revive those disruptive forces that created Pakistan itself. This principle carried to its logical conclusions, will create fresh problems for us which, strictly speaking, are against our very Constitution.

This is not the time nor the occasion for me to discuss alternative lines of action. This must obviously wait until the results of the policy now adopted by Government are known. I do not question the motives of those who have accepted the Agreement. I only hope that the Agreement must not be unilaterally observed. If the Agreement succeeds, nothing will make me happier. If it fails, it will indeed be a very costly and tragic experiment. I would only respectfully urge those who believe in the Agreement to discharge their responsibility by going to East Bengal - not alone, but accompanied by their wives, sisters and daughters and bravely share the burden of joint living with the unfortunate Hindu minorities of East Bengal. That would be a real test of their faith.

While I have differed from the line of approach adopted by our Government to solve a malady which perhaps has no parallel in history, let me assure the House that I fully agree that the supreme need of the hour is the maintenance of peace and security in India. While utmost pressure can and must be put upon the Government of the day to act rightly, firmly and timely to prevent the baneful effects of appeasement and to guard against the adoption of a policy of repression, no encouragement should be given to create chaos and confusion within our land.

If Government is anxious to have another chance - and let us understand clearly that this is the last chance that it is asking for - by all means, let Government have it. But let not the critics

of Government policy be silenced or muzzled. To our misfortune, one of the parties to the Agreement has systematically broken its pledges and promises and we have no faith in its capacity to fulfill its future pledges, unless it shows by actual action that it is capable of so doing. This note of warning sounded by us should not be unwelcome to Government, for it will then act with more keenness and alertness and not permit the legitimate interests of India to be sacrificed or sabotaged in any way.

While dealing with the problem of refugees, we will have to consider also the stupendous task of rehabilitation. The present truncated province of West Bengal cannot simply bear this colossal burden. It is a mighty task where both official and non-official elements can work together for the larger good of the country and between Government and its critics there will always be ample room for co-operation in facing a problem which concerns the peace and happiness of millions of people and of the advancement of the entire nation.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

The contribution of the RSS in the field of Kashmir's accession to India and in its one Head, one symbol and one constitution is now an honourable page of history.

The courtiers of the Maharaja, his associates and members of the council of ministers exerted their full pressure for Kashmir's accession to India. Sardar Patel and Mahatama Gandhi too tried but the Maharaja was not prepared. He was not ready to accept the domination of Nehru. On the other side Pakistani troops had reached the borders of Kashmir.

Meeting between the Maharaja and Sh. Guruji

The efforts of political leaders had failed. Time was getting delicate. In these conditions Sardar Patel sent a message to the RSS Chief, Sh. M. S. Golewalker, through Mehar Chand Mahajan, requesting him to use his influence to prevail upon the Maharaja to accede to India. Sh. Guruji cancelled all his engagements and

rushed to Srinagar from Nagpur by air via Delhi to resolve the ticklish and delicate question. Through the efforts of Mehar Chand Mahajan and Pt. Premnath Dogra a meeting between Sh. Guruji and Maharaja Hari Singh was arranged.

It was not a personal meeting. It was not a discussion on house, land, property or on the politics of votes. It was a historical meeting on the question of integrity of the nation. The Maharaja who remained unmoved by many national leaders bowed his head in front of a simple-clad staunch nationalist. He understood the importance of protection of his religion and nation. The Maharaja sent the accession proposal to Delhi and Sh. Guruji directed the RSS workers in Jammu and Kashmir to shed last drop of their blood for the security of Jammu and Kashmir. After issuing these directions he returned to Delhi.

It may be recalled that prior to it, the Punjab provincial chief of RSS, Rai Bahadur Badri Das, had also met the Maharaja in July 1947 but his efforts to prevail upon Hari Singh to accede to India had failed.

Sh. Madhav Rao Mulle, has given information about this historical fact in the book "Shri Guruji Samagra Darshan". Sh. Madhav Rao was Praant Pracharak of RSS in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Madhav Rao, "the union Home Minister, Sardar Patel, had told Mehar Chand Mahajan, Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, to prepare Maharaja Hari Singh for accession of the state to India. Mehar Chand Mahajan conveyed the message to Sh. Guruji requesting him to meet the Maharaja and prepare him for the accession. Mr. Mahajan had arranged the meeting between Guruji and the Maharaja".

"Guruji reached Srinagar by air from Delhi on October 17, 1947. The meeting took place on the morning of October 18. During the meeting prince Karan Singh, with his plastered fractured leg, was present while lying on the bed. Maharaja's contentian was that 'my state is fully dependent on Pakistan. All

routes passed through Sialkot and Rawalpindi. Lahore is my airport. How can I have relations with India ?' Sh Guruji made him to understand saying 'you are a Hindu king'. By acceding to Pakistan your Hindu people will have to struggle against grave difficulties. It is correct that there is no road, rail or air link with India but it can be set right quickly. In your interest and in the interest of Jammu and Kashmir state it is better for you to accede to India."

"Sh. Mehar Chand Mahajan told the Maharaja 'Guruji is saying the right thing. You should accede to India'. In the end the Maharaja presented a "Tosa" (superfine pashmina) shawl to Guruji. In the accession of Jammu and Kashmir with India Guruji has made an important contribution."

There is no mention of this important event in any recognised book of history. Nobody knows about it, none has turned the page of history, nobody reads the event regarding the State's accession to India. There are three reasons for it.

First, the men of the RSS know how to serve the country. The RSS activists are away from propagating it and they have no interest in publicising it through their writings. Guruji hated self-praise and self-publicity. Therefore, there is very scanty material written on the nationalist activities of the RSS. It is natural for the Sangh to remain aloof from the pages of history. Like many political leaders, Guruji did not write his autobiography.

Secondly, it was the nature of the Congress to get history written. Afer achieving independence whatever books of history have been written on the freedom struggle, place has been given only to the Congress revolution. Subash Chander Bose, Savarkar, Bhagat Singh, Dr. Hedgewar and others have been sidelined. Under this trend the above mentioned national contribution of Guruji has not found any mention in the books of history. The above historical event has been lost in the self-praise of the ruling congress leaders and in their political intrigues of undermining the nationalism of others.

Thirdly, the installation of Sheikh Abdullah as Prime Minister soon after the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. In order to take the credit for the State's accession to India the Sheikh lied, changed his stance many times and got many historical documents and files destroyed. It is said that the Sheikh even got destroyed Maharaja Hari Singh's historical documents and his memoirs.

Initial security of Kashmir by RSS activists

By the middle of 1946 the RSS Shakhas had flourished in the Kashmir valley. Educated youths came in contact with the Shakhas. And the majority of the Sangh activists in the Shakhas used to be Kashmiri Hindus. Guruji was on tour of north India and a plan had been prepared for organising a massive public meeting in Srinagar.

All activists and workers of the RSS felt happy. It was natural. It was a great event to have a top leader of a top Hindu organisation in Kashmir where 90 per cent population was that of the Muslims, where the Hindu society has remained supportless for centuries, where the sanctity of religious places had been destroyed and where the Hindu society was existing without any respect. The meeting was organised in the premises of D.A.V. College, Srinagar. Over 1,000 RSS activists were present in the meeting. Prominent citizens of the city too were invited. they attended the meeting with faith. While emphasising the need for unity in the Hindu society, respected Guruji called for vigilance against the activities of the antinational elements and urged people to defeat these elements unitedly. This function brought about encouragement in the Valley which was evident during the Pakistani aggression on Kashmir.

The sacrifices rendered by the RSS activists for protecting Kashmir at the time of the Partition deserve a special treatment and mention in the history of India. Right on the morning August 15, 1947 pro-pak elements had started creating disturbances in Srinagar. Pakistani green flags were hoisted on all Government

buildings. The RSS activists accepted the challenge and finalised a scheme in the headquarters of RSS. By 10 o'clock thousands of RSS workers and Hindus assembled near Amirakadal bridge. Their patriotism was worth seeing. Even those who dubbed Kashmiri Pandits as cowards had to keep their fingers crossed when within a short time Pakistani flags were removed and a big procession was taken out in major streets of Srinagar. Pro-Pak elements were challenged. The entire atmosphere reverberated with the slogan of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai". The Hindu society felt encouraged and the Maharaja too realised the strength and devotion of the Sangh.

Two prominent Sangh Pracharaks, Mr. Harish Bhanot and Mr. Mangal Sen, established contact with Pakistani officers and, in the disguise of Muslims, collected all the information about the military activities of Pakistan and of the possible invasion, for one month, which was given to Prof. Balraj Madhok. They even gave the information about the date of the aggression and the routes the invaders were to follow. The Maharaja summoned Mr. Madhok. The meeting took place in the Palace in Srinagar. After getting all the information the Maharaja demanded 200 RSS workers so that they could be given arms for protecting the city. Realising the gravity of the situation, Mr. Madhok promised to bring 200 RSS activists the next morning.

The RSS workers were given information at midnight directing them to report at Arya Samaj temple at six in the morning. In the morning 200 RSS workers were present and everyone of them was a student and had come out of their houses to render sacrifices for the country. A prayer meeting was held and later were carried to Badami Bagh cantonment in an Army truck where some soldiers were ready. They quickly taught the young students how to handle the gun. By the evening these youths had reached the battle front. For two days these RSS soldiers stopped the Pakistani troops till the arrival of the Indian Army. Everybody knows about this historical sacrifice but none speaks about it. The Sheikh too knew about it. The

same Sheikh who had left behind the people on hearing the news about the Pakistani invasion and fled, alongwith his family members, to Bombay. The Valley was saved first by the RSS workers and then by the Indian Army, not by the fugitive Sheikh.

Martyrs of Kotli

By a mistake on the part of the Indian Airforce, boxes of ammunition were dropped on the other side of the Nallah which was within the firing range of Pakistani troops. How to evacuate those boxes ? Who will get them ? If the troops were asked to do it, it would have meant death for them. Who would then fight later ? If the ammunition boxes were not evacuated, the Indian troops could be killed. What to do ?

There was need for a great sacrifice for evacuating these boxes. The Army commander hit on a plan. He thought that only the RSS youths could do it and accordingly he reached the RSS headquarters at Kotli. Mr. Chander Prakash, Manager of Punjab National Bank, Kotli branch, was the organiser of the Sangh at that time. He listened attentively to the Army commander and told hilm "How many youths are needed" ?

The Army officer said "eight will do". Chander Prakash had become emotional out of his eagerness to render sacrifice and told the Army officer that he should wait in the office without any worry because he would bring seven youths, eighth being himself, within half an hour.

Chander Prakashji immediately rushed to the town and Sought names of those who were ready to render sacrifice. More than 30 youths came forward. It was a problem for Mr. Chander Prakash to make a selection out of the 30 youths. He lined all of them and picked up seven youths. It was difficult to make others agree to stay back and ultimately he had to issue his command. For an RSS activist command from his leader is like the command from God. The rest stopped. They bid tearful farewell to their eight comrades. They knew the meaning of this farewell and as such it was a mute farewell.

Mr. Chander Prakash reached the Army officer with the seven youths within less than half an hour. The eight youths reached the battlefront with the commander. They were informed about the work they had to carry out in evacuating the ammunition boxes without allowing the Pakistani troops to have any idea of it and in bringing those boxes upto the Indian troops. After understanding their job, the eight youths marched forward to their destination.

While crawling, slipping and stumbling, the eight youths reached the Nallah on whose other bank lay the boxes. The Nallah was full of water with sharp flow. These youths swam fast across the Nallah to reach the goal.

Each youth picked up one box. One carrying it on the head and the other on his back. Gradually they re-entered the Nallah but could not maintain silence in the water. The sound of their movement reached the Pakistani troops. The result was indiscriminate firing from the machine-guns on them. They were not scared of death because they had come out of their houses in the guise of martyrs. But they had one worry: they wanted to see the boxes reach the hands of the Indian soldiers before the youths were killed. Under the rain of fire, the youths crossed the Nallah and were marching towards the Army camp.

The rain of bullets turned into torrents. Chander Prakash and Ved Prakash, the two youths, were hit by bullets. Both of them were injured and fell down but there was no time for others to take care of the two. After leaving the two wounded youths there, the six youths marched ahead with boxes on their backs. These youths succeeded in their mission and handed over the ammunition boxes to the Army. They were worried about their two colleagues whom they had left behind. These six youths left for the spot for carrying back the wounded comrades and followed the same route under the rain of bullets. How hazardous it was ? But they were determined as they had great affection for their comrades. They had fulfilled their mission and now their task was to evacuate their two injured comrades. Where

shall such an example of mutual love be found ? When the six youths left for evacuating their two comrades, the rain of bullets further intensified. They crawled to the place where the two wounded comrades had been left. But they got the bodies of the two comrades. They had achieved martyrdom in the service of their motherland. There was no time to wail and weep. They carried the two bodies on their back and started their trek on the rockey and bushy paths to reach the Army camp.

But it had become difficult to escape easily from the continuous firing from behind. They had travelled a small distance when one more comrade received two bullets in his ear and became a martyr there and then. His body too was carried by them and marched forward. It was a terrible test for these nationalists: they had to crawl with dead bodies on their back on difficult path and that too under the heavy rain of bullets. They kept on moving and the Army camp was nearby. But nature needed more blood. One more comrade was silenced with a bullet that hit him. His body too was carried by the surviving youths with courage and fortitude.

It was heart rending scene. The youths returned to their camp. Four returned out of the eight. Each carried a body of the martyrs. All the RSS workers, citizens, mothers and sisters of the Kotli town had waited in tension for the full day. Slogans of "Shaheedoon ki Jai" (respects to Martyrs) and "Bharat Mata ki Jai" (respects to Mother India) rent the sky. People decorated the four bodies with flowers and arrangements for their cremation were made by people weeping and wailing over the loss.

A big pyre was built outside the town. The four bodies were placed on the pyre with the Army salute and amid the wails, tears and sobs of the people. Women showered flowers on the pyre. The flames of the pyre started kissing the sky. The four, who had carried the bodies to the town, burst into tears. They cried, they wept. The Army authorities directed all to return to their houses immediately. It was getting dark. The Pakistani troops continued firing from the mountain in front.

The ammunition boxes were opened. The soldier was equipped with ammunition and now our troops too had the ammunition. The Indian troops launched a fierce attack on the Pakistani soldiers like a hungry lion. The heavy attack shook the Pakistani troops. Our soldiers fought chivalrously throughout the night. With the advent of the pink dawn the Indian troops had captured the hillock. Here the pyre of the martyrs was silent and tLere on the hillock the tricolour fluttered.

Repairs of Airfields

There were no airfields for facilitating the landing of Indian Airforce men. Wherever they existed, they were in a pitiable condition. Not to speak of the planes even people could not walk on those runways. There was need for their quick repair and renovation. But it was not possible to arrange a big force of labourers. Even if thousands of labourers could be arranged it was not possible to pay them their wages in those conditions. There was need for such devoted labourers who would work free of cost for repairing the airfields. Therefore, the eyes of the Army officers and citizens fell on the RSS activists. They knew that the RSS activists were dedicated and sacrificing.

The matter was discussed with Sangh leaders. Everyone was ready. On receiving the directions, thousands of RSS workers jumped into the field. The repair and the renovation of the airstrips in Srinagar, at Poonch and in Jammu were taken in hand. The work on these airfields was carried out round the clock. Everyday the RSS activists would come out in their shorts to work on the airfields for which the Sangh made arrangement for the tools. The workers would carry food from their houses. After working continuously for several hours these RSS workers would sit together to partake their food and it was lovely sight of love and affection.

Under their principle of "we shall donate everything to the country and in return we shall not accept anything", these RSS workers gave up their trade. went on leave from the Government

services and abandoned their domeotic happiness to work round the clock for making these three airstrips worthy for landing within the stipulated time.

Remained Steadfast against Bullets

In the meantime there was a report indicating that 1200 Hindus and Sikhs had been surrounded by the enemy at Palandhari, 20 kms north-west of Kotli, and.their lives were in danger. The Sangh people, under the leadership of Mr. Kedar Nath Sahni, met the Army authorities requesting them to evacuate 1200 Hindus and Sikhs who were counting the time of death at Palandhari. The Army authorities realised the gravity of the situation but refused to provide any help on the plea that the number of troops they had was even insufficient to protect the town and as such how could they send the soldiers out of the town. And when the Sangh workers insisted by informing the Army officers that a big number of Hindus were counting days of their life, the 'authorities were moved. They agreed to send 31 soldiers under the leadership of one Lieutenant Ishwari Singh and with them went one police inspector, Mr. Hari Singh, and about 100 RSS activists.

The report about the plan of evacuating people from Palandhari by the Army and the Sangh workers was sent by a Muslim Tehsildar to Zaildar and Nambardar of Sarsave who were Muslims. The twa passed the report to the tribals.

Next morning 30 Army jawans, 12-15 poiicemen and about 100 RSS activists left for Palandhari under the leadership of Lt. Ishwari Singh. The moment the caravan started climbing the ascent, it came under indiscriminate heavy fire. The enemy had fortified itself on the higher elevations. Since the enemy was equipped with machineguns, mortars and bombs, its attack became fierce.

Despite being surrounded unexpectedly from all the four sides, the battle lasted for several hours. Not a single Hindu soldier and RSS activists turned back even being in a smaller

number than the enemy and despite having meagre weapons and ammunition. Their steps were not shaken despite the roar of the rain of bullets. While killing the enemy troops, they also met death one by one.

One feels a wave of sacrifice in one's mind while wishing to touch the blood-red soil of Palandhari where the soldiers and the RSS workers shed their blood. Repeated salutes to such brave sacrifices.

Sheikh's Dictatorship and Praja Parishad's Agitation

The pro-Pak and anti-India sentiments of the Sheikh had been exposed in front of the entire world. In the Congress, too, the mistrust against him was increasing. The people of India had become aware of his anti-national and treacherous attempts. But by accepting a plebiscite, Nehru had forged a dangerous agreement with Sheikh Abdullah which was dangerous not only for the integrity of India but had put a question mark on the future of 20 lakh people in Jammu and Ladakh. In comparison to the rest of the country, Kashmir was given a special status. The flag, the constitution etc were made separate for Kashmir. Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookherjee apprised the Parliament of the dangers of this agreement but Nehru did not agree. He even did not think it proper to talk to the peoples' representatives of Jammu and Ladakh.

When people of Jammu started feeling the impact of this agreement, it gave birth to the embers of a revolt. The RSS workers decided to oppose the Sheikh stoutly after visualising the anti-Hindu stance of the Sheikh. With the slogan of one constitution, one symbol and one leader a new party, named Praja Parished, was formed under the leadership of Pt. Prernnath Dogra to start a powerful but peaceful agitation. Thousands of Sangh activists took to the streets for a sacrifice for the country's integrity and unity. Many leaders and workers of Praja Parishad went to Delhi to apprise the Government of India, members of Parliament and leaders of different political parties of the

separatist activities of Sheikh Abdullah. They met also Nehru. But it seemed that he was not prepared to listen to even a word against Sheikh Abdullah. Therefore, Dr. Shyama Prasad took the historical decision of supporting this struggle.

A powerful Satyagrah was launched in Delhi and Pathankot. RSS workers left their demostic worries and courted arrest. Dr. Shyamaprasad tried to mediate between the Government and leaders of Praja Parishad but failed. According to the words of Mr. A.B. Vajpaye, "Nehru's obduracy made all his (Dr. S. Prasad's) efforts completely unsuccessful. The man who prided in announcing that he would not give a needle-tip land without a fight reminded one of the story of Daryodhana and Nehru refused even to talk to Praja Parishad". And there was no other alternative left for Dr. Mookherjee except for blowing the conch of agitation. In the absence of any agreemnt taking shape he was committed to launch a peaceful satyagrah and agitation in support of the people of Jammu.

MARTYRDOM OF DR. SHYAMAPRASAD

After ensuring peoples' support for the agitation, Dr. Prasad decided to test on the touchstone of Nehru's statement that Kashmir was 100 per cent part of India. In this context he decided to come to Jammu without a permit. While leaving Delhi for a two-day tour of Punjab on May 9, he issued a statement that his purpose of visiting Jammu was not to foment tension and trouble but his aim was to make another bid to resolve the discord through peaceful and honourable means. While commenting on his decision to enter Jammu without a permit he said that as a citizen of India he had the full right to visit any part of the country and since Nehru would say everyday that Kashmir was 100 per cent part of India he had decided to go there without any permit.

This step of Dr. Mookherjee received powerful appreciation in the entire country. Between Deihi and Pathanot thousands of men and women greeted him at many stations with the slogan

"abolish permit system" and he was assured of their support. It was expected that Dr. Prasad would be arrested before reaching Pathankot. But out of the scare of the Supreme Court, the Government allowed him not only to reach Pathankot but also assured that it would not take any step aganist him when he would enter Jammu.

The Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur District, Mr. Vashisht, informed Dr. Prasad at Pathankot that he could visit Jammu without any permit and the Government of India will not create any hurdle in his way. He also informed him that in Jammu Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. would meet him. But when he entered into the Jammu border alongwith his associates, the Kashmir militiamen stopped him on the Ravi bridge. There, the Superintendent of Police, Kathua, directed him not to enter into the state border. Dr. Prasad refused to accept the order and was arrested under the Kashmir Security Act.

Prior to his arrest he told people, in a message, that "I have entered into Jammu and Kashmir, but in the capacity of a prisoner". His message spread like lightning in the entire country. Satyagrahis, from various corners, started entering into Jammu and Kashmir without permits. With one stroke of Dr. Prasad the artificial wall of permit system between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of India crumbled and with it Nehru 's lie that Kashmir was 100 per cent part of India stood exposed.

After his arrest Dr. Mookherjee was taken to Srinagar where on the 43rd day of his detention he was declared dead in mysterious circumstances on June 23.

Letter of Dr. Shyama Prasad's mother to Nehru:

".... I know he cannot be brought back to life. But I want to know what role your Government has played in this shocking event 60 that people can know the reasons behind this tragedy in this independent country. Allow justice to take its course while dealing with any crime of an individual, even if he is occupying a high post, so that people are allowed to remain

alert against such criminals and there was no scope for any other mother like me to wail and weep over such a type of tragedy."

Nehru's reply:

"... I have enquired from those people who know the reality. I can say only this much that I stand by truth and there is no mystery around this incident .."

Yogmaya Devi's reply:

"... I do not want any clarification from you, I want an inquiry. Your arguments are hollow and you are afraid of facing the truth. Remember, you are answerable to the People and God. I treat the Kashmir Government guilty of the murder of my son and I charge it with having killed my son. I hold your Government guilty of concealing the matter and of attempts at manoeuvring ..."

As a result of the rejection of the demand for an enquiry, people of India raised one voice saying that Dr. Mookherjee was killed. The life of a national leader was finished for achieving hateful political goal.

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